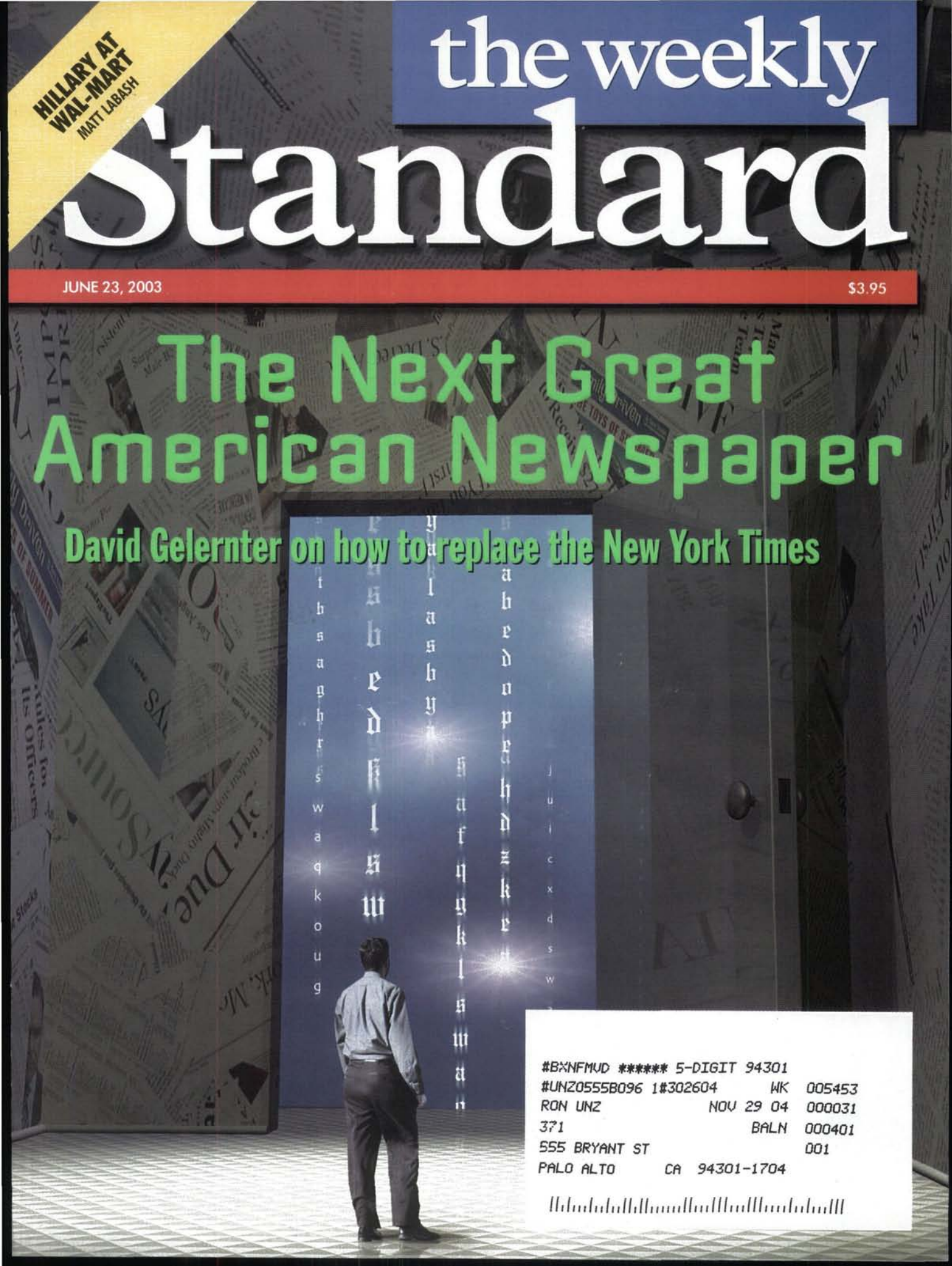
the weekly
Standard
JUNE 23, 2003 $3.95

HILLARY AT WAL-MART
MATT LABASH

The Next Great American Newspaper

David Gelernter on how to replace the New York Times



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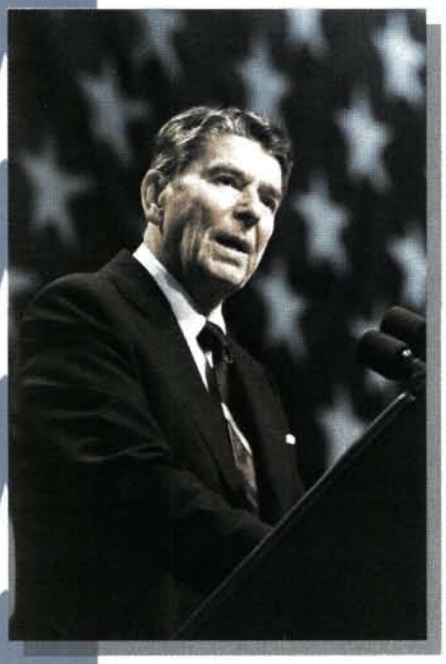
Ronald Reagan Loved Cutting Taxes. But **He Raised the Highway User Fee** to Strengthen the American Economy.



"More efficient roads mean lower transportation costs for the many products and goods that make our abundant way of life possible."

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President Ronald Reagan 11/27/82

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Ronald Reagan proved tax cuts can spur our economy. But he also knew investment in highway and public transportation infrastructure is essential.

Making our roads safer and reducing traffic congestion will improve American productivity, strengthen the economy and give you and your family more time together.

It's OK to be a conservative and support an increase in the federal highway user fee.

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the weekly Standard

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Heard any Good Harvard Blonde Jokes?

How many blondes does it take to write an amicus brief? Or make a decent film critic? *USA Today* plans to find out. In an apparent attempt to get at the finer points of tort law and pink handbags, the Gannett national daily last week had the Harvard Club of Washington send out a mass e-mail trolling for fair-haired Harvard Law grads to preview and critique MGM Studios' *Legally Blonde II: Red, White & Blonde*, which opens July 2. Here's the e-mail, which was forwarded to THE SCRAPBOOK by one of our many Cantabridgian correspondents:

To: xxxxxxx@post.harvard.edu
From: info@harvard-dc.org
Subject: USA Today special preview screening of Legally Blonde 2
Date: Thu, 12 Jun 2003 15:10:48

USA Today seeks five or six blonde female Harvard Law School grads in the Washington DC area who have spent time working on Capitol Hill and are willing to write a critique of the upcoming comedy Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde. In the sequel, Reese Witherspoon's lawyer Elle Woods is in DC trying to get a bill passed that would outlaw product testing on animals.

There is a free early screening of the movie at 7:30 pm Thursday June 26 at the multiplex at 4000 Wisconsin Ave. A USA Today reporter will attend the screening as well and have a photographer take the picture of each blonde Harvard Law School participant. We will need to meet at 6:30 pm in order to beat the crowd and have enough time to take the photos.

The deadline for the written critiques would be Friday June 27. They don't have to be long but should address certain points, such as: whether the legal process and what Elle encounters on the job is at all realistic, whether they ever encountered some of the trouble that Elle has with being taken seriously sometimes, whether she is a good role model despite her fondness for pink and chihuahuas, whether this promotes or harms the image of female lawyers in any way, and any other points they might have once we all see the movie.

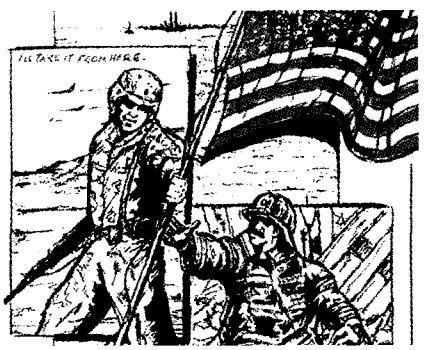
USA Today wants to make this a fun package. And the critiques only need to be several paragraphs long. They can be emailed to the reporter the day after the screening. Interested blonde Harvard Law School grads should send their names and a daytime phone where they can be reached to xxxxxxxxxxx@usatoday.com. It helps to have already seen the first Legally Blonde movie, but this is not required.

THE SCRAPBOOK hears that reviews based on the "Gender and the Law" 3L seminar will not be accepted. We take no position on whether posing for the *USA Today* photographer promotes or harms the image of female lawyers in any way. ♦

Better Late Than Never

In our October 29, 2001, issue, we printed a sketch, "I'll Take It From Here," which had been e-mailed to us from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, then under way for the North Arabian Sea. We asked readers to contact us if they knew who the artist was. We thank subscriber Stacy Kresic of Concord, Ohio, for remembering our request and calling in with the answer to this long unanswered question.

Many have claimed ownership of the poignant drawing, which circulated via e-mail, the web, and even on T-shirts (Donald Rumsfeld has one) after the September 11 attacks. But we're satisfied that the answer is Jeff Grier, an art teacher at Madison High School in



northeast Ohio. According to a June 3 article in a local paper, the *News-Herald*, the sketch was first conceived by Grier's colleague, Madison High math teacher Tom Hernan. Grier has since adapted the sketch into an oil painting, which caught the attention of a Pentagon official who saw it on the Internet. Grier presented it on June 13 to the Pentagon, where it will be on display indefinitely. ♦

Partial-Truth

A couple weeks back, THE SCRAPBOOK had occasion to praise *Los Angeles Times* editor John Carroll for a memo he'd sent to the paper's section chiefs about pro-choice bias in news coverage of abortion politics. "We may happen to live in a political atmosphere that is suffused with liberal values (and is unreflective of the nation as a

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whole)," Carroll reminded his colleagues on May 22, "but we are not going to push a liberal agenda in the news pages of the *Times*." So far as we're aware, Carroll & Co. have made good on this promise—at least over the ensuing month.

But the rest of American journalism? Not so good. A case in point: Recent news coverage of congressional legislation banning partial-birth abortions.

In its latest incarnation, that measure was approved by the House of Representatives June 4 and is now finally—after eight years—headed up Pennsylvania Avenue to a president who'll actually sign it. Previous iterations of the bill were routinely vetoed by President Clinton, who just as routinely justified the move with one or another version of the same "factual" argument: that partial-birth abortions are a rare and necessary medical intervention generally employed to rescue the mother from grave health risks.

Even at the time, and even to non-specialist ears, the logic of this argument seemed peculiar. What self-respecting doctor, confronted with a genuine medical emergency, would resort to a surgical procedure that takes three full days to complete? Sure enough, President Clinton's partial-birth "facts" have long since been thoroughly debunked as fraudulent. Longtime WEEKLY STANDARD readers may remember, in particular, a lengthy investigation by the *Washington Post* resulting in a September 17, 1996, story concluding that "in most cases where the procedure is used, the physical health of the woman whose pregnancy is being terminated is not in jeopardy." Also, there was that spectacular, February 1997 confession by Ron Fitzsimmons of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers that he'd "lied through my teeth" about the rarity of partial-birth abortions, a confession that was reported at the time by the *New York Times*: "In the vast majority of cases, the procedure is performed on a healthy mother with a healthy fetus that is 20 weeks or more along, Mr. Fitzsimmons said."

It's a funny thing, then—raising at least an inference of bias, you would think—that even the *Post* and *Times* have lately resuscitated Fitzsimmons-like "lies" as objective truth. From the *Post*'s news account of the House vote June 4: "Doctors typically perform [partial-birth] procedures for health reasons, when the fetus's head is enlarged and when doctors want to reduce the likelihood of retained fetal tissue that can lead to infection in the woman." And from the *Times*: "The procedure . . . is rarely used, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a non-profit research group. . . . Abortion rights groups and many doctors assert that the legislation passed tonight could affect several procedures that are sometimes necessary to preserve the health and fertility of the woman."

If THE SCRAPBOOK weren't opposed to human cloning, John Carroll of the *Los Angeles Times* would be our first candidate. ♦

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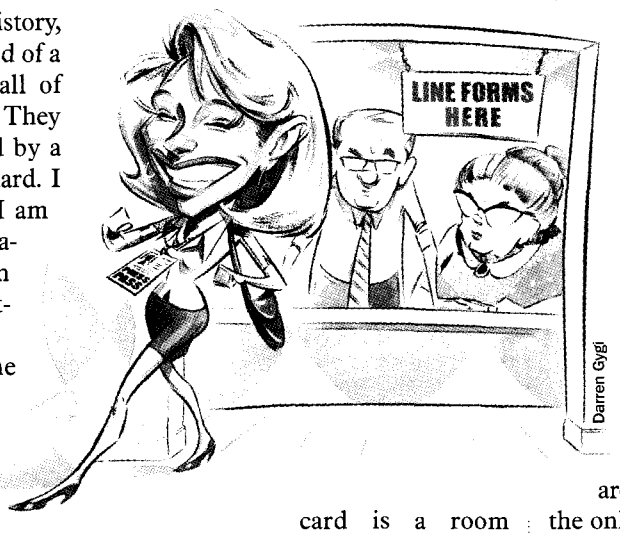
Casual

Do Not Pass Go

"Do you have a pass?" asks the burly rent-a-cop, as I stand in the midst of a swirling mass of middle schoolers. No, I explain, I have come to the Capitol to acquire a press pass, so naturally I don't have one yet. "You can't get in without a pass," he replies stoutly, and crosses his arms. Sighing, I extricate myself from the crowd of school kids being taken on a forced march through their nation's history, and attach myself to the back end of a group of twenty-somethings, all of whom sport the coveted passes. They head for another door, covered by a much less imposing security guard. I try to sneak in behind them. I am stopped—but this time the explanation of my Catch-22 falls on sympathetic ears, and I am granted admission.

Once on the inside, I assume my Washington insider persona. I breeze through the metal detector—only to be immediately nabbed by a security guard. Shunted off to the visitor's desk, I explain my mission to the clerk, present my documentation (a note on Weekly Standard letterhead proclaiming me a full-time reporter), and tell him that I am destined for the periodical press gallery, room H304. He eyes me suspiciously and asks, "Are you daily press?" No, I say, pointing to the stationery, I am from a weekly. "No matter," he says, "weeklies go to the daily press office." Fine, I say, which room? He rifles through some papers, then looks up and announces, "H304."

Upon arrival in H304 (after I'm booted out of a "Representatives Only" elevator), I am greeted by the announcement that the U.S. House of Representatives does not take cash. A new press pass requires the payment of a five-dollar fee. I scrounge around in my purse and find an orphan check, crumpled and inky, luckily separated from my checkbook, which sits safely at home. Once the check has been made out and handed over, the man behind the desk takes a tiny card with an eagle on it and types my name and the words "The Weekly Standard" very slowly with two fingers. On the back of the pre-printed card is a room number in the Dirksen building. Down I go, three flights of stairs, weaving through the crowds examining a Capitol basement exhibit on the history of the Rotunda, over to the Senate side, onto the secret mini-subway. I make my way, brandishing the card with the eagle like a talisman at the half-dozen security guards who seem bound and determined to impede my progress.



The subway is calming, but the ride on the little train is all too short and is interrupted by the arrival of a loud group of Korean men, who join me in the small stuffy car. Whatever has brought them to the Capitol does not seem to have gone well—they are sweating profusely and, I gather, swearing at each other in Korean.

Finally, I make it to the designated room in Dirksen. No one is there. I walk up to the sign that says "Line Forms Here" and wait. No one appears. I go out and check the number on the door. I walk back in and stroll up to the desk. Suddenly, a large, matronly woman rises from behind the desk where she previously crouched unseen and gives me a look so pointed I can practically hear her thoughts. The line, her eyes telegraph, forms THERE, and NOT at MY desk. I back up, alarmed. "Next!" she calls out, apparently appeased, though the formality seems unnecessary since I am the only person in the room. She instructs me to fill out a yellow card with all the information that was on the eagle card, along with the information that was on the letter taken from me in H304.

A mousy-looking man glides out from behind a pillar, and I present him with my handiwork. He says, "Thank you, Miss . . . " Here he pauses and squints at my last name, his lips move, and then, Porky Pig style, he gives up and opts for "Katherine." "Have a seat in Chair 3," he says. I turn and discover that the chairs lining the room are numbered. And, though I am the only one in the room, it appears I am destined for Chair 3. I sit. After some typing, the man reassigns me to a couch (without a number) under a television, which is broadcasting C-SPAN, the channel of choice on Capitol Hill. I wait. Once again the man behind the desk grapples with my last name, fails, and takes the easy way out. He hands me the coveted pass. It has a note attached warning me that my first-born child and left kidney are forfeit if I lose it.

These dire warnings strike me as unnecessary. After all, punishment for a lost pass is automatic—I'd have to spend another day fighting the new security and old bureaucracy of Capitol Hill to get a new one.

Katherine Mangu-Ward

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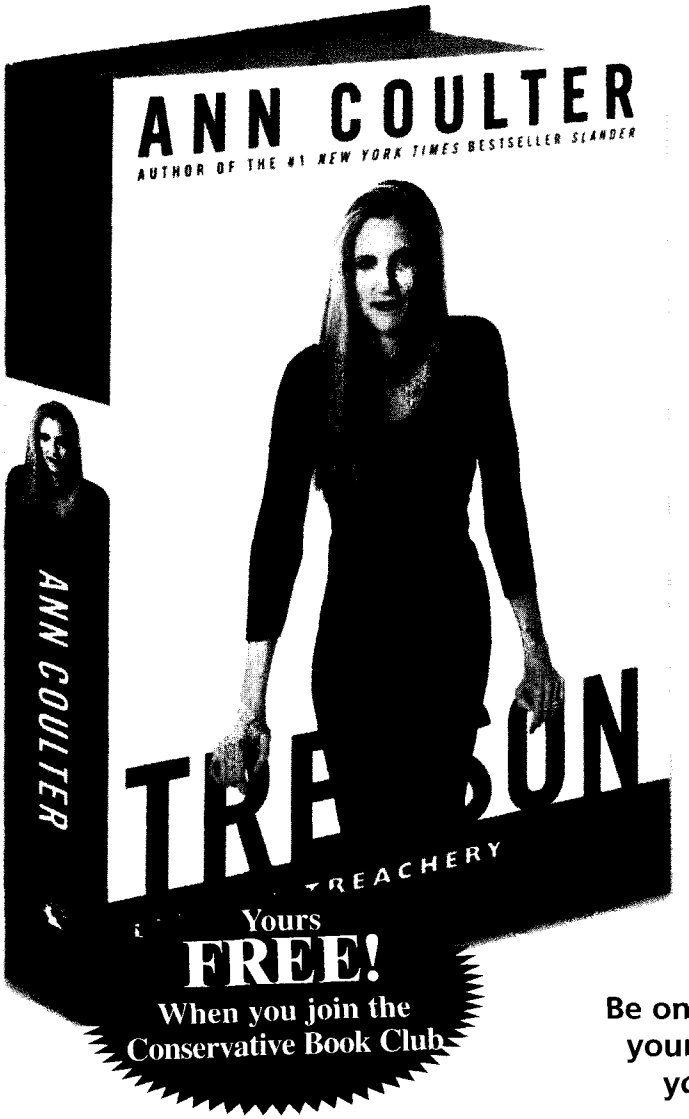
From Ann Coulter: a blistering exposé of liberal treachery against America

From the Cold War to the War on Terrorism



In this stunning follow-up to her #1 *NY Times* bestseller, *Slander*, leading conservative author Ann Coulter insists that liberals leave foreign policy decisions to conservatives. In *Treason*, Coulter contends that liberals have stood with the enemies of American interests in every major crisis from the fight against Communism to today's war on terrorism. Re-examining the 60-year history of the Cold War and beyond—including the career of Sen. Joseph McCarthy, the Hiss-Chambers affair, Ronald Reagan's face-off with Mikhail Gorbachev, the Gulf War, the Clinton impeachment, and Operation Iraqi Freedom—Coulter reveals the Left's shameful record of blindness to, and active cooperation with, the forces of totalitarianism and terror.

"Whether they are defending the Soviet Union or bleating for Saddam Hussein, liberals are always against America," writes Coulter. "They are either traitors or idiots, and on the matter of America's self-preservation, the difference is irrelevant. Fifty years of treason hasn't slowed them down."

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PBS's Pocketbook

Perhaps Bill Moyers would consider funding PBS through one of his "foundations," described in Stephen F. Hayes's "PBS's Pontificator" (June 9). This would make help make it possible for PBS to operate without taxpayer money. PBS could also take money from unions and other interest groups as well. Everyone wins. The left would have a solid platform to broadcast its views (since it seems the *New York Times* is a tad mushy these days) and Moyers would not have to deal with folks like Hayes, who continue to insist on equality of disclosure.

Michael Becker
Scottsdale, AZ

Lupia's Lament

I write to draw attention to a fabrication in David Tell's "An Appearance of Corruption" (May 26). The article is about the legal battle over the constitutionality of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), which President Bush recently signed into law. I was brought into the case as an independent expert. My job was to clarify which of the plaintiff's scientific claims were based on speculation and which were based in fact. While my role in this case was limited, my report is cited dozens of times by two of the three federal judges who rendered the initial decision on this manner. These two judges, one appointed by President George W. Bush and the other a Democratic appointee, concur with every one of my conclusions that they cite. The third judge did not address any of the conclusions in my report, mentioning it only once in passing. I was also deposed by Floyd Abrams. Using a brief excerpt, Tell offers the following account of the deposition:

> Arthur Lupia . . . buckled under questioning from legendary First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams. Are the academic standards on display in Brennan's grant-proposal research prospectus "appropriate," Abrams wanted to know?
>
> Lupia: In what sense do you mean "appropriate"?
>
> Abrams: You don't understand the word?
>
> Lupia: Well, I do, sir, but there are several senses in which one could ask me the question.
>
> Abrams: Do you think it is consistent with scholarly behavior of honor and seriousness as a member of a learned profession?
>
> Lupia: No, that I do not.

Tell's representation of this interchange as pertaining to "the academic standards on display in Brennan's grant-proposal research prospectus" is a fabrication. Tell should have reported that Abrams and I were not discussing the Brennan grant-proposal at this point in

the deposition. While Abrams asked me many questions about the Brennan Center's activities, the question that directly precedes the excerpt was not one of them.

The interchange in question occurs soon after my lawyer objects to Abrams's original characterization of the Brennan Center prospectus because it "mischaracterizes the language of the document." I followed this objection by discussing other academic grant proposals, but none on campaign finance. Abrams then asks questions about a series of hypothetical campaign finance studies, each of which is slightly different.

The question that precedes Tell's excerpt is about one of these hypothetical studies . . .

> Abrams: [Is it] appropriate to seek the funding of a study which will be aborted if the answers start to come out contrary to the political preferences of the scholar who is seeking the funding?
>
> Lupia: In what sense do you mean appropriate? . . . [Tell's excerpt continues.]

As Tell states, I reply that the hypothetical study would be inappropriate. Now, if at some point in the deposition, Abrams had asked me to agree that the Brennan study is equivalent to this particular question's hypothetical study, and I had done so, then it would not be a fabrication to describe my answer as pertaining to the Brennan study. Tell's version is a fabrication because Abrams never asked this question and, if he had, I would not have agreed.

Is there an important difference between the hypothetical study and the Brennan study? The next page of the deposition answers the question clearly. Here, Abrams reads a letter by Dr. Ken Goldstein, who ran the Brennan study.

> Abrams: Our research will allow observers to determine whether Democrats are correct to argue a bill will hurt them badly or whether Republican claims to be the aggrieved party are justified, helping bill drafters to create reform that is fair to both sides.

The quote establishes that Goldstein's political preference is to "be fair to both sides." Does he also favor reform? Yes. But does Goldstein favor BCRA specifically or a less comprehensive reform, perhaps even a trivial reform or one very different than BCRA? To the best of my knowledge, Goldstein wanted any reform to be "fair to both sides." I do not believe, and did not agree during the deposition, that the Brennan study's funding would have been aborted if it was not "fair to both sides" or if it cast reform proposals other than BCRA in a favorable light.

It is true that Abrams asked many direct questions about the Brennan Center's study in other parts of my deposition. But it is a complete fabrication to suggest that in answering those questions, I labeled the study as inappropriate. Tell may counter that some-

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CAN HONEY REPLACE DRUGS?

In 1989, an editorial in the respected British publication, the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* stated:

> The therapeutic potential of uncontaminated, pure honey is grossly underutilized. It is widely available in most communities and although the mechanism of action of its properties remains obscure and needs further investigation, the time has come for conventional medicine to lift the blinds off this traditional remedy and give it its due recognition. (Vol. 82, pp. 384-385).

In the 14 years since this editorial appeared, there has been an outpouring of work on honey—not anecdotes, but solid scientific studies—that document the medicinal value of honey.

The medicinal benefits of honey are due to honey's antibacterial properties and to its moisture retaining properties.

Honey has been shown effective against a wide range of bacteria, including Helicobacter pylori (the main cause of stomach ulcers, and implicated in a number of other maladies) and Staphylococcus aureus, aka Staph (drug resistant strains of this pernicious bacterium are causing problems in hospitals across the country).

Honey has been shown to provide relief for, or to cure, a number of different disorders, including, but not limited to the following:

Diarrhea, ulcers, infections, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), gastrointestinal problems, and staphylococcus (staph) infections.

Infectious diseases caused by bacteria that are sensitive to Honey include the following:

Anthrax, diphtheria, urinary tract infections, ear infections, meningitis, respiratory infections, sinusitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, infected animal bites, typhoid, dysentery, abscesses, boils, carbuncles, impetigo, tooth decay, puerperal fever, rheumatic fever, sore throat and cholera.

A number of different types of wounds have been successfully treated with Honey, including:

abrasions, amputations, abscesses, bed sores, burns, burst abdominal wounds following cesarean delivery, cancrum, cervical ulcers, chilblains, cracked nipples, cuts, diabetic foot ulcers and other diabetic ulcers, a fistula, foot ulcers in lepers, infected wounds arising from trauma, large septic wounds, leg ulcers, malignant ulcers, sickle cell ulcers, skin ulcers, surgical wounds, wounds to the abdominal wall and perineum, varicose ulcers.

The drug industry spends billions on advertising and promotion—$7 billion on sales representatives alone (*The New Republic*, December 16, 2002), billions more on print and TV ads. In contrast, the total sales of honey in the U.S. are miniscule—well under a billion dollars. The drug industry has a powerful lobby in Washington D.C., the honey industry has none. The "side effects" portion of drug information often runs into thousands of words; there are no side effects for honey. The advertising budget for honey is next to nothing. The positive results of clinical studies on honey are truly amazing—if drug companies had results like this you'd be bombarded with the data. Now, a new book details the amazing, proven benefits of honey.

HONEY *The* Gourmet Medicine

by Joe Traynor

"...an eye opener...especially pertinent in this time of multidrug-resistant bacteria."

—Daniel Blodgett, M.D.

"...very informative and well-written. I highly recommend this book for everyone, especially medical professionals."

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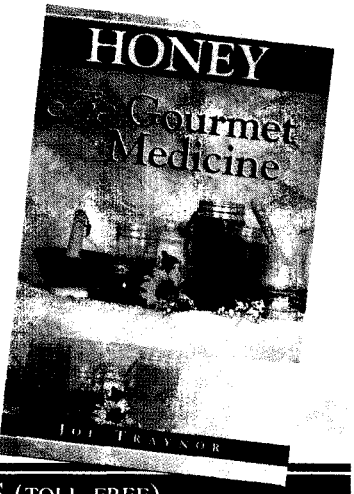

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how his account of my participation remains valid. Working against such claims is the fact that no reference to my participation in the case by any of the three judges is even remotely consistent with Tell's unique spin. Readers who want to verify such facts for themselves can view the judges' decisions, my report, and all other documents relevant to this case at *campaignlegalcenter.org*.

ARTHUR LUPIA
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI

DAVID TELL RESPONDS: Arthur Lupia invites renewed "attention" to two sentences in my Brennan Center piece—which is fine by me. Those sentences suggested that plaintiff's attorney Floyd Abrams, during deposition testimony in the *McConnell* trial, wrested an embarrassing concession from Lupia about the integrity of Brennan's *Buying Time* research. I stand by this judgment. And I am now prepared to render another one: Arthur Lupia must be off his rocker or something. He has sent us a letter accusing me of outright "fabrication" even though he has to know the charge is baseless—and has to know that I know it, too. Did he suppose I would let him get away with such a slander?

Here, then, is a full transcript of the relevant section of Lupia's *McConnell* deposition:

ABRAMS: I will mark as Exhibit 3 a document on the stationery of Brennan Center for Justice, dated January 12, 1999, signed by E. Joshua Rosenkrantz and addressed to the Pew Charitable Trusts. Have you seen this document before?

LUPIA: I think so, I don't recall—I'm actually not sure.

ABRAMS: Now, this document in the first paragraph on page 1 states that the Brennan Center is proposing an ambitious agenda for the next two years to spur new thinking about campaign finance reform and galvanize policy makers in the public and then it says, "The project is designed to begin with a modest initial start-up phase leading to the intense public activities of the second stage."

LUPIA'S ATTORNEY: It actually says "internal start-up phase."

ABRAMS: Internal, excuse me, start-up phase leading to the intense public activities of the second stage. Kind of proposes a $200,000 grant for Phase One and $800,000 for the optional second phase. You've seen grant proposals, have you not, that are staged in some way that have a first part and a second part?

LUPIA: Yes, sir.

ABRAMS: Could I direct your attention to page 6. You see there after the articulation towards the top of the preliminary budget for Phase One being $200,000. It then states, "Whether we proceed to Phase Two will depend on the judgment of whether the data provide a sufficiently powerful boost to the reform movement. The working group will assess the sheer amount of issue advocacy relative to electioneering, the timing of issue advertisements, the level—their level of concentration in districts with competitive elections, their content compared to electioneering by candidates and any evidence of coordination between candidates and their allies." And the first line of that stated that whether we proceed to Phase Two will depend on the judgment of whether the data provides a sufficiently powerful boost to the reform movement. Have you ever seen language like that in a grant proposal?

LUPIA: Well, again, if you allow analogies of my experiences at the bank, I've seen things like that—at the World Bank, sorry. I've seen things like that.

ABRAMS: Have you ever seen a grant proposal which is dependent on the judgment of whether the data obtained will assist in the enactment of domestic legislation?

LUPIA'S ATTORNEY: I'm going to object to that because I think it mischaracterizes the language of the document, but go ahead and answer.

LUPIA: In some sense, again with reference to grants I've seen on affirmative action or the role of information in elections, how much people know—I'm sorry, I have seen grants where going to a second stage depends on observing things in the first stage. In those cases—in the affirmative action case, there would be a call for action later on that they might send to legislators. And in the—if you're trying to change things about how information is transmitted, again, you might try and make other people aware of that and some outside of science.

ABRAMS: If a friend of yours who was a scholar came to you and said in substance, I'd like to do a study of a particular subject, but if the answers come out contrary to what I would like the Congress to do as a result of the study, I want to cut it off right away, what would your response be to that?

LUPIA: I'd have to know a little more about the context of that question.

ABRAMS: All right. Suppose a colleague had come to you and said, I want to do a study on campaign finance, but I want to make sure that McCain-Feingold is adopted by Congress and I don't want to provide data which will help the bad guys who are against reform, so I'm going to propose a two stage study, the first of which is to gather some information on a preliminary basis and then I'll see how we're doing. But if I find that the data is not helpful to what I believe Congress ought to do, I'm going to cut it off. What would your reaction be?

LUPIA: I'm sorry, what is it that they are asking me to do?

ABRAMS: To advise them as a friend?

LUPIA: As to—

ABRAMS: As to whether it is appropriate to seek the funding of a study which will be aborted if the answers start to come out contrary to the political preferences of the scholar who is seeking the funding?

LUPIA: In what sense to you mean appropriate?

ABRAMS: You don't understand the word?

LUPIA: Well, I do, sir, but there are several senses in which one could ask me that question.

ABRAMS: Do you think it is consistent with scholarly behavior of honor and seriousness as a member of a learned profession?

LUPIA: No, that I do not.

Arthur Lupia's claim that the above conversation concerned not the Brennan Center's *Buying Time* grant proposal but some other, "hypothetical" document, is preposterous. ♦

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the weekly Standard

Bush's Justice

President Bush may or may not get the opportunity to name a Supreme Court Justice this summer. But if he does, who would be the right choice? Bush himself has told us. In 1999, Fred Barnes asked Bush what kind of judge he'd select. "I have great respect for Justice Scalia," he said, "for the strength of his mind, the consistency of his convictions, and the judicial philosophy he defends." There you have it. Someone like Scalia, assuming all other qualifications are met, would be the best choice for the Court.

In fact, we'd drop the word "like" in thinking about who should replace Chief Justice William Rehnquist, were he to step down. In that case, Scalia would be the logical choice, assuming he is willing to take the center seat. And then, of course, Bush could backfill with someone like Scalia. Likewise, if John Paul Stevens or Sandra Day O'Connor—next to Rehnquist, the oldest and longest-serving justices—were to leave the Court, Bush will surely want to select a replacement who shares Scalia's judicial philosophy.

We commend to Bush his own standard, not simply because he articulated it but because the Court needs more judges like Scalia. On race, religion, criminal justice, and national power, the Rehnquist Court is an improvement on the Burger Court, which was only slightly better than the Warren Court. Yet the Rehnquist Court has in important respects been a disappointment. Consider *Roe* v. *Wade*, the 1973 decision that invented the abortion right, thus destroying self-government on an issue previously left to the people. The Rehnquist Court has not only declined to overrule *Roe* but also reaffirmed it in the 1992 case of *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey*. Too many times the Rehnquist Court, notwithstanding its dominance by appointees of Republican presidents, has regarded Supreme Court precedents like *Roe* as sacrosanct, placing them above the Constitution itself. Against the anti-constitutional tendency of judicial supremacy, Justice Scalia, joined by Justice Clarence Thomas, has consistently dissented.

Fortunately, for a Court that needs judges who will abide by the Constitution, there is no shortage of qualified people who would be available for appointment. They include appellate judges Sam Alito of the Third Circuit, J. Michael Luttig and Harvie Wilkinson III of the Fourth Circuit, Edith Jones of the Fifth Circuit, Danny Boggs of the Sixth Circuit, and Michael McConnell of the Tenth Circuit. We'd add to this (non-exhaustive) list two individuals who aren't judges—Solicitor General Theodore B. Olson and Sen. Jon Kyl of Arizona.

Will Bush choose an Alito or a Luttig or an Olson? His generally excellent choices for the circuit courts suggest he might. But it's hardly a sure thing. He might be tempted simply to "trade up"—to get someone who is better at the margins than, say, Stevens, the lone Ford appointee who long ago joined the Court's liberal bloc. Or better than O'Connor, Reagan's first appointee who often votes with Scalia and Thomas (and Rehnquist and Justice Anthony Kennedy), but whose opinions sometimes lack a rule of law clear enough to provide useful guidance. Simply to trade up, however—unless the trade is all the way up—is to waste an opportunity to influence the direction of the court. And Republican presidents since Nixon have wasted too many of these opportunities. What's amazing is how many they've had—eight of the last ten vacancies occurring on their collective watch. Bush surely will not want to waste the first one he gets.

There is also the temptation to nominate White House counsel Alberto Gonzales, who since Austin days has been a member of Bush's inner circle. Were Bush to appoint Gonzales, he would be the Court's first Hispanic, and as such, Bush might be told, a signal to the growing Hispanic population that its home is in the Republican party. But Gonzales would be a problematic choice for the Court. His legal career so far doesn't justify confidence that he would turn out to be a justice having the "strength of mind," "consistency of convictions," and "judicial philosophy" Bush admires. If Bush wants to engage in diversity politics, he can confine that enterprise to the executive branch and not extend it to the judiciary, where the appointments are for life. He could, for example, name Gonzales his next attorney general, in which case he would be the first Hispanic in that post.

A third temptation is to nominate someone without much of a paper trail who, the candidate's advocates would claim, will prove Scalia-like on the bench. In oth-

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er words, a "stealth" nominee. For a president who has endeavored not to repeat his father's mistakes, we would hope the sufficient answer to that suggestion is the name David Souter. Appointed by George H.W. Bush in 1990, Souter is no longer a blank slate but a jurist of whom the most partisan Democratic president could be proud.

Stealth is the strategy of those who imagine that a fight on principle with Senate Democrats can be avoided. It can't be. Even from a nominee with the dullest, offensive-to-no-one résumé, Senate Democrats will demand a confession of belief in the Supreme Court's abortion jurisprudence.

Here it must be said that the entire point of the Democrats' strategy on Bush's circuit nominees—whether as the majority, delaying and not holding hearings, or as the minority, engaging in filibusters—has been to influence the kind of choices the president makes for the circuits and, especially, the Supreme Court. Already Democrats are offering Bush advice on his Supreme Court choices. Last week Charles Schumer suggested that Bush pick his Senate colleague, liberal maverick Arlen Specter!

The president can't avoid conflict with Senate Democrats, not if he is going to name someone like Scalia. And indeed, were Rehnquist to step down, we would like to see the Democrats try to oppose Scalia as his replacement and to get the fight over principle well joined. Scalia is abundantly on the record on the issues that matter, including *Roe* v. *Wade* and *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey*. ("If only for the sake of its own preservation," Scalia wrote in a 2000 case, "the Court should return [abortion] to the people—where the Constitution, by its silence on the subject, left it—and let *them* decide, State by State, whether this practice should be allowed. *Casey* must be overruled.") We can think of no one more able to stand his ground, and for right principle, than Scalia.

Yet Scalia should not have to stand alone. Nor should any other nominee. The great lesson of the Bork nomination is that a president must fight for his Supreme Court nominees. Bush should be ready to engage. So should his aides, though it is unclear who would do the job. Attorney General John Ashcroft has been oddly silent on judges. Perhaps Vice President Cheney, whose vote might be needed, could rise to the occasion. In addition, why not let the nominee make his own case? Surely it is time to move beyond the antiquated custom in which the nominee is required to keep silent while interest groups and senators slander him.

In any case, it will be important to make arguments that go beyond the shopworn phrases, "strict construction" and "judicial restraint." Specifically, the administration will have to explain why we need justices who construe the Constitution fairly, who recognize its powers but also enforce its limits, who decline to extend or create rights that aren't found in the Constitution, and who are willing to overrule holdings at odds with the Constitution. Let Senate Democrats argue for justices who embrace unlimited national power and create new "constitutional" rights whose enforcement necessarily leaves less room for self-government.

A presidency is always defining itself. So far the Bush presidency—though no one could have predicted this before September 11—has defined itself largely in terms of national security and foreign policy. If a vacancy on the Supreme Court occurs, another defining moment for this president will present itself, and the choice Bush makes will reveal his true commitment to constitutional self-government.

—Terry Eastland, for the Editors

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Hillary Goes to Wal-Mart

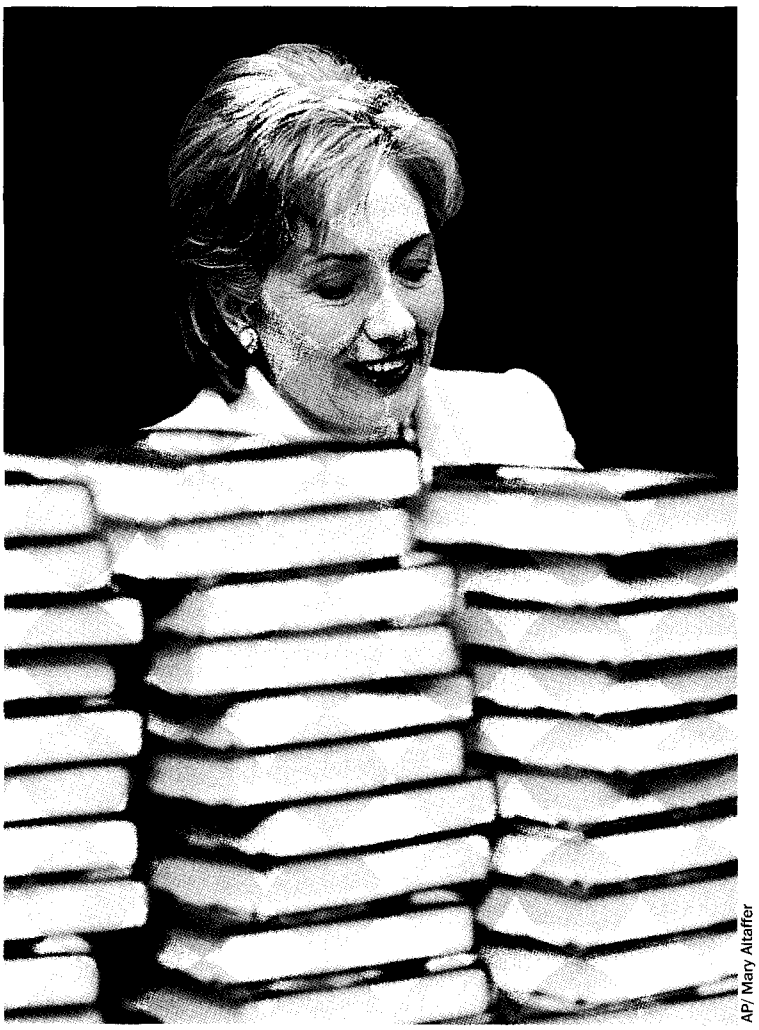
The latest skirmish in the Clinton wars.

BY MATT LABASH

Fairfax, Virginia

IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE the electricity one feels when crossing this Northern Virginia strip-mall parking lot to attend Hillary Clinton's *Living History* book-signing. But I haven't been this excited about Wal-Mart since my one-hour photos came back in 25 minutes. It makes me feel all sprightly and young again—as if it were 1998.

Hillary has yet to arrive, but already, her fans and detractors are sparring. On one side of the street, snaking out of the store through the lawn'n'garden section, are the Hillaryites. They carry umbrellas and folding chairs and squeeze-bottles. They look like public librarians and NPR pledge-drivers. They arrive as early as 9 A.M. to snatch up all 2,000 books and be in place to get them signed at 7:30 that evening. They are a patient, trusting people. And they will need patience to endure the taunts of their opponents, standing across the way on a median strip.



AP/ Mary Altaffer

Matt Labash is senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

The Wal-Mart parking lot is shaping up to resemble an old-school gang fight. Except instead of knives and chains, the combatants use placards and really weak song parodies. The Hillaryites' tormentors are the Freepers, a fierce, warlike tribe from the Free Republic organization—a fire-breathing conservative band of Internet brothers who often call each other by their screen names, even in person. The gist of the Freeper complaint—one seconded by many mainstream book reviewers who are much less *intense* than they are—is that Hillary has been paid $8 million to perpetrate a fraud, one of the many tributary frauds being her claim that she didn't know her husband had relations with Monica Lewinsky until he admitted it in August 1998, seven months after the story broke.

The contempt expressed for Hillary is of a nature that even I, who labor in the vineyards of full-time Clinton-bashers, have rarely heard. Like many conservatives, they seem to dislike her more than Bill—presumably because Bill is regarded as a phony, but he at least lives his lies. Hillary, the thinking goes, is living someone else's lies, making her a phony squared. The Freepers take pride in not being full-time activists—"We all have REAL JOBS," says the business card of one of them. Still, they come off as dedicated protest professionals. They save money on placards by writing different messages on the front and back of their signs. And they bring fun costumes, like the guy wearing a full devil suit, who communicates, in his own understated way, that Hillary is the Princess of Darkness.

Dave Fordice, a Freeper mechanical engineer, is conducting a high-volume marriage seminar (What would you do if your husband serially cheated on you?), when he's accosted by a Hillary partisan in a postal service uniform, who goes, well, kind of postal. It's hard to understand her through all the foaming, but she says

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something about Dave not being God, which all of us—even Dave—know, because God probably wouldn't wear a "Fry Mumia" T-shirt, as Dave does.

The Freepers and the Hillaryites go back and forth, speaking like overheated bumper stickers, in a manner that resembles our political discourse through most of the nineties. A Freeper placard touts Monica's "Quote of the Century: 'I voted Republican this year, the Democrats left a bad taste in my mouth.'" "Boo!" say several of the Hillaryites. The Freepers start bleating like barnyard animals, then break into a chorus of "Sheeple Who Need Sheeple." "Loser!" cough the Hillaryites, now holding L-signs up to their foreheads. The Freepers are outnumbered about 200 to 1. But preparation is everything, and the Freepers seem to be getting the best of it.

The Hillaryites are frustrated, but a bellicose, heavyset woman starts trying to rally the troops by screaming "Bozo! Bush is a BOZO!" I scramble over to her and try to conduct an interview. But she's tasted blood and finds it difficult to stop. She tries to respond to questions and wage war at the same time. The effect is that of a Tourette's sufferer short of medication: "My name is Tina, and those are BOZO LOVERS! BUSH IS BOZO THE CLOWN! Hi, who you with? BOZO! Who do you write for? DOWN WITH BOZO!"

Across the street, Freepers are getting satisfaction. "Do you feel the love?" smiles one of them. But they up the ante with the announcement of a "Hillary Book Toss." It's done in homage to Hillary, who reportedly once chucked an ashtray at her husband's head. Whoever throws the book farthest gets to keep it and get it signed by Hillary. Just as the Freepers announce this, Wal-Mart security moves in and tells them they will have to conduct the book toss over to the side, on a grassy knoll. Safety comes first. Initially, I think security just wants to ensure that nobody sustains a head injury by getting clipped with the 562-page behemoth. But after reading it, I see the less obvious concern: If the book had fallen open to page 465, where Hillary tells a friend, "My husband may have his faults, but he has never lied to me," someone might have laughed himself to death.

The only takers on the book toss are three 15-year-old boys who purport to be Hillary fans. I ask one of them how he could engage in this lefty equivalent of a flag-burning. Does he understand that the Freepers are desecrating her book? He looks confused. I'm not sure he knows what "desecrate" means. Another of the 15-year-olds grabs the book and wings it. It takes off on a sideways trajectory, like a foul ball down the right-field line. It goes 20 yards, tops. He looks embarrassed. "It slipped," he says, apologetically. "That's okay," commiserates a Freeper. "The Clintons are slippery people."

Inside the store, Hillary has snuck in through the back, right by layaway and the restrooms. The signing desk sits in front of a black curtain, with book cover photos surrounding the author. I've been looking at the photos all day, so I don't immediately recognize her without the benefit of airbrushing. But there she is, with her sassy, sensible cut and her lime-green pantsuit. She takes her place at the table and starts signing like a banshee. She signs her name only—no personalizing—and her head swivels up like a speedbag for each of her adoring fans. Her able assistants hustle people off before they can ask probing questions like, "Could you please sign it to . . . ?" But Hillary greets everyone with a smile, as her eyes bulge big—so big that the whites attain 360-degree clearance around her irises.

To the people assembled, this expression means different things. To her fans, her eyes say, "I'm one of you—just a gal who likes to stop by Wal-Mart for a Sam's Choice cola and a $1.78 Nacho Chile Pie." To her moderate critics, they say, "Look at me, I'm almost human." To her Freeper-style critics, the eyes say, "Back off, or I'll ice you, just like I iced Vince Foster." To me, they don't say much of anything, since her staffers won't let reporters near her.

Instead, I swim around the plastic flip-flop racks and Prayer Bear stuffed animals, to interview her supporters in line. Just for kicks, and to see if they are as gullible as Hillary purports to be, I ask when exactly during impeachment year they finally believed that Bill Clinton had had a relationship with Monica Lewinsky. Here are their verbatim responses: Hillaryite 1: "When he said so." Hillaryite 2: "I don't remember." Hillaryite 3: "I don't remember." Hillaryite 4: "When he admitted it." Hillaryite 5: "I think he was set up by the Republicans."

Hitting the other end of the line, I grab a Hillaryite to ask how his signing went. "She's pure evil," he says. "She's a cancer on America." It turns out he's not a Hillary fan at all. But he stood in line for nearly four hours just to try to get her to inscribe his book, "To BJ," which stands for . . . well, her husband knows. He also wanted to get his picture taken with her—as he flipped her the bird. He didn't succeed, and now he's kicking himself: "It was something my grandchildren might have said, 'You know, I'm proud of granddad.'"

As I leave the most polarizing figure in American politics, still signing books frenetically, I grab a cherry ICEE and a *Star* tabloid, and head to the counter. I can't wait to find out about Demi Moore's "red hot affair" with Ashton Kutcher, but as I flip to the story, by coincidence, I see Hillary's severe-looking mugshot. The tabloid obviously went to press before Hillary's book was released. But the story quotes an "insider" who says that her book will "whitewash" her hiring of private investigators to keep tabs on the husband she now defends, as well as her efforts to keep "his various women quiet." The *Star*, I'm reminded, has a pretty good batting average on the former first family. I slip into the night in a wave of nostalgia, with Bill, Hillary, and the *Star*.

It feels like old times. ♦

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Questions of Mass Destruction

. . . for hawks and doves alike.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID and written in recent weeks about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. As the methodical search for those weapons continues in Iraq, the back-and-forth in the United States and Europe about their whereabouts has gone ballistic—with hysterical, unfounded accusations leveled by critics of the war and increasing defensiveness by the Bush administration.

There are two elements to the current debate: substance and politics. Sometimes it's hard to separate the two, as Senate Intelligence Committee chairman Pat Roberts noted last week in dismissing Democratic calls for a formal investigation. And as the nation slowly turns its attention to the 2004 presidential campaign, the politics of the war will be inescapable.

But first, the substance. There are serious questions the Bush administration will have to answer:

¶ How did a forged document about Iraq's pursuit of uranium make it into the State of the Union address?

¶ Why would President Bush tell the world that "we have found weapons of mass destruction," when quite plainly we have not?

¶ Before the war, the administration rightly focused on interrogating Iraqi scientists about WMD. What are the scientists in U.S. custody saying today?

¶ Is it possible that some of Saddam's WMD have already been distributed to terrorist networks?

These and other concerns deserve a full hearing—in Congress or elsewhere. As the president's critics point out, nothing is more serious than taking a nation to war, and the American people properly expect a full accounting of the Bush administration's reasons for doing so.

Many of those who argued for regime change in Iraq believed a compelling case for war existed before the Bush administration's attempt to make it last fall, and it even pre-existed the Bush administration itself. For seven years following the Gulf War cease-fire, Saddam Hussein claimed he did not possess weapons of mass destruction. And for seven years he lied. The routine, as described in detail by U.N. weapons inspectors, was simple: Iraqis told inspectors they had no mustard agent and then expressed their profound shock when quantities of mustard were found; Iraqis told inspectors they had never weaponized VX nerve agent and then feigned surprise when inspectors found weaponized VX nerve agent. And on it went. In the process, we learned that Saddam Hussein had constructed elaborate concealment mechanisms—the Iraqi regime spent a decade working to ensure that prohibited weapons' production was kept quiet. Still, black market procurement efforts continued unabated, and when inspectors were kicked out in 1998, the Iraqi regime had failed to account for vast quantities of its WMD stockpiles.

Here is what President Bill Clinton had to say about that, on February 17, 1998:

> Iraq repeatedly made false declarations about the weapons that it had left in its possession after the Gulf War. When UNSCOM would then uncover evidence that gave the lie to those declarations, Iraq would simply amend the reports. For example, Iraq revised its nuclear declarations four times within just 14 months and it has submitted six different biological warfare declarations, each of which has been rejected by UNSCOM. In 1995, Hussein Kamal, Saddam's son-in-law, and chief organizer of Iraq's weapons-of-mass-destruction program, defected to Jordan. He revealed that Iraq was continuing to conceal weapons and missiles and the capacity to build many more. Then and only then did Iraq admit to developing numbers of weapons in significant quantities and weapon stocks. Previously, it had vehemently denied the very thing it just simply admitted once Saddam Hussein's son-in-law defected to Jordan and told the truth.

Clinton wasn't finished.

> Now listen to this: What did it admit? It admitted, among other things, an offensive biological warfare capability—notably 5,000 gallons of botulinum, which causes botulism; 2,000 gallons of anthrax; 25 biological-filled Scud warheads; and 157 aerial bombs. And might I say—UNSCOM inspectors believe that Iraq has actually greatly understated its production.

On November 8, 2002, after nearly four years without U.N. weapons inspectors in Iraq, the world formally registered its belief that Iraq possessed WMD with a unanimous vote on Resolution 1441 at the U.N. Security Council. Four days later, speaking on French radio, French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin told his countrymen, "If Saddam Hussein does not comply, if he does not satisfy his obligations, there will obviously be a use of force," later adding, "the security of the Americans is under threat from people like Saddam Hussein who are capable of using chemical and biological weapons."

Later that same month, 19 nations attending NATO's Prague Summit signed a statement backing Resolution 1441, which affords "Iraq a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations under relevant

Stephen F. Hayes is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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resolutions of the Council."

That consensus held in the months leading up to war. With a few exceptions, disputes about Iraq centered not on whether Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction but on the best way to disarm him.

All of this was on the public record. To believe Saddam Hussein's Iraq was WMD-free required logical gymnastics difficult even for the most limber of the anti-war contortionists—that Saddam Hussein lied about his WMD programs for seven years with U.N. inspectors in Iraq and then suddenly, when inspectors left, disarmed unilaterally. One also had to believe that after he got rid of these weapons—weapons that led directly to U.N. sanctions that crippled his country—he chose not to notify the international bodies who could have lifted sanctions if Iraq had demonstrated compliance.

AFP / Roberto Schmidt

The WMD search goes on.

This wasn't a serious argument before the war, and it's not a serious argument now. And if the Bush administration faces some difficult questions as the search for WMD continues, so do its critics:

¶ Why would a regime without weapons of mass destruction manufacture mobile laboratories to make such weapons?

¶ Numerous defectors, many with recent, firsthand knowledge of Iraq's WMD programs, have detailed elaborate production and concealment efforts. Were they all lying?

¶ Colin Powell's February 5, 2003, presentation to the U.N. contained telephone intercepts between senior Iraqi military officers discussing concealment of proscribed weapons. He reported on a conversation that took place on January 30, 2003.

> "They're inspecting the ammunition you have, yes."
>
> "Yes."
>
> "For the possibility there are forbidden ammo."
>
> "For the possibility there is by chance forbidden ammo?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> "And we sent you a message yesterday to clean out all of the areas, the scrap areas, the abandoned areas. Make sure there is nothing there."
>
> "After you have carried out what is contained in this message, destroy the message because I don't want anyone to see this message."
>
> "Okay?"
>
> "Okay."

Would it be necessary to "clean out all of the areas" if "forbidden ammo" didn't exist? How do you explain these comments? Were the intercepts faked?

¶ Doesn't it seem odd that the Bush administration would "hype" or "fabricate" WMD reports knowing full well that such claims would be tested once the Iraqi regime fell?

Many of the loudest administration critics have avoided answering those questions. They have called for an investigation but claim they already know its conclusion: Bush lied. This is politics, pure and simple. In fact, many of the same voices screeching about the Bush administration's "alarmist" interpretation of intelligence today are the same ones who were faulting the administration for ignoring alarms before September 11.

Over the past several days, the *Nation's* Eric Alterman has accused the president of lying before the war; his boss, Katrina vanden Heuvel, hinted that Bush administration deception might be an impeachable offense; *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman suggested that the administration lied not only about the WMD but also about the presence of al Qaeda in Iraq. (How does he know? Two al Qaeda leaders have denied links, and Krugman apparently believes the world's top terrorists are

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more credible than President Bush.)

Liberal politicians are gleefully joining the fray. Jan Schakowsky, a member of the Democratic leadership in the House, said on CNN's *Crossfire* last week that the administration could be "lying" about WMD. (Struggling to contain her enthusiasm about her own cleverness, Schakowsky couldn't hold back a grin as she expressed concern that the world might believe the United States was "crying Wolfowitz.") After breezing past some of the difficult questions, Schakowsky said this: "If there are intelligence failures, let's find out about it. If not, why politically did we hear about this drumbeat to go to war when in fact those weapons—we may have had intelligence. In fact, we know that there was no reliable evidence."

No reliable evidence? That's not what she believed last fall, when she cited weapons of mass destruction as a reason to contain, rather than disarm Saddam Hussein.

"Once an attack on Iraq is launched complete with hundreds of thousands of ground troops," Schakowsky said in a statement September 6, 2002, "Saddam Hussein will have no incentive to refrain from using his chemical and biological as well as conventional weapons against our troops and Israel."

Two months later, on November 27, 2002, she wrote to defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld to register her "concern that if President Bush decides to deploy U.S. military forces against Iraq, the service men and women who are sent into battle may not be adequately protected against chemical and biological attacks."

Schakowsky was right to have been concerned about WMD last fall. The entire world shared her concern. And the fact that U.S. troops have not yet turned up these weapons raises serious questions today. The most troubling of those is one that should be the center of the Bush administration's agenda today:

¶ Is it possible that some of the WMD has already been distributed to terrorist networks? ♦

Saudi Mischief in Fallujah

Will no one rid Iraq of these meddlesome imams?

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

IN RECENT WEEKS, most Western media have reported the continuing attacks on U.S. troops in Fallujah, west of Baghdad, as tenacious resistance by defeated Baathists, aided by local Sunni Muslims enraged at the soldiers' alleged mishandling of crowds, which has led to fatal clashes. There is mounting evidence, however, that this is not the whole story.

In a piece dated June 1, the Saudi website *alsaha.com*, which propounds the extremist views of the kingdom's official Wahhabi sect of Islam, proudly reported the combat deaths in Fallujah of two Saudi subjects, Faisal Sultan al-Rougi al-Otabi and Tahir ash-Shoumani. The writer, Nassim al-Islam (doubtless a pseudonym—it means "wind of Islam"), adopts a tone of adulation: "Congratulations, Faisal, the color is that of blood and the scent that of musk. I wish I were with you to win great honor as a martyr."

Meanwhile, on the ground in Iraq, *Newsweek* reporter Scott Johnson was also picking up signs of Saudi involvement. In a story in the June 16 issue, Johnson quotes a U.S. intelligence officer in Baghdad as saying that, increasingly, Iraqi sources are identifying the armed men who are organizing to fight the coalition forces as Wahhabis. Johnson explains this term as "Muslims akin to the extremist sect that inspired Al Qaeda." Said the U.S. intelligence officer, "Now, all of a sudden, these Wahhabi guys have been appearing. We're hearing that word a lot more: Wahhabi."

According to Iraqi sources inside the country who insist on anonymity, Wahhabi imams in the Fallujah mosques, as well as dozens of agitators from Saudi Arabia, have begun aggressive preaching of suicide bombings against coalition forces as part of a campaign of guerrilla warfare.

At the same time, in Iraqi Kurdistan, where Saudi-Wahhabi religious organizations were introduced before the war, the Wahhabi militia Ansar al-Islam is again active. Attacked and scattered by U.S. forces during the main offensive in April, it has reconstituted itself and has struck in the towns of Halabja, Biahrah, and Dohuk, according to a Kurdish leader. The car bomb is Ansar's weapon of choice. The group is known to have Saudi participants, and propaganda in its favor appears in the Saudi media.

Most important, the end of the war has, paradoxically, provided the Wahhabis a new pretext for infiltration—namely, humanitarian relief. Despite all the exposure of the misuse of Islamic charities to promote terrorism, the same official Saudi relief organizations that have come under investigation since 9/11 are now entering Iraq. The International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), for example, investigated by U.S. and other governments for involvement in the funding of terrorism across the globe, is lauded in the Saudi daily *Al-Watan* (The Nation) for its "relief work" in Sunni districts of Iraq.

These several indications of stepped-up Wahhabi activity in Iraq should raise a red flag—for they conform to a pattern now familiar from Afghanistan, Central Asia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Chechnya.

Stephen Schwartz is director of the Islam and Democracy Program at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies in Washington, D.C.

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The Wahhabi power-grab strategy in pursuit of the extremists' mad dream of imposing their "pure" Islam on all Muslims, then launching a jihad against the world, begins with indoctrination. Food, clothing, tents, and other relief supplies are distributed only to those willing to take classes in Wahhabi doctrine. Preachers are sent from the Gulf states with the mission of Wahhabizing local Muslims by opposing "practices of unbelief" alleged to be rife in local Islam. These may include friendship with Jews and Christians; acceptance of women's driving or going to school; traditional customs such as visiting graves (hated by Wahhabis, who believe gravestones are idols and honoring the dead is polytheistic); and devotion to Sufism, the Islamic form of spirituality.

The next step is the establishment of training centers and camps where unemployed youths are trained to fight and lead irregular combat operations, especially suicide attacks. These centers are often directly linked to relief distribution points. Incitement of "martyrdom" against better-equipped, modern forces is a key Wahhabi tactic. Its purpose is to provoke major retaliation. Civilian casualties are useful in inciting orphaned and alienated young people to join the "struggle." A further inducement is the classic offer of stipends for recruits' families if they die in suicide operations. For the displaced victims of war, this may be the only economic reward immediately available.

Then, crucially, Wahhabi agitators seek to eliminate opposition from local religious leaders. New mosques and madrassas are built with Saudi subsidies and staffed exclusively by Wahhabi imams and teachers. The system of madrassas is expanded, where possible to become an independent extremist educational system on the Pakistani model, setting neighbor against neighbor and son against father. Where necessary, established imams are paid cash to "convert" to Wahhabism. Uncooperative imams are boycotted and loudly labeled unbelievers or government spies.

Reuters / Aladin Abdel Naby

U.S. Army scouts patrol in Fallujah.

Imams who actively oppose the extremists risk their lives—witness the murder of traditional imams in Chechnya, Daghestan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and other countries. At least 200 such murders can be readily documented. This fact by itself explains why anti-Wahhabi imams around the world—even in America—are so reluctant to go public.

Finally, Wahhabi agents often engage in vandalism against local graveyards, historic mosques, and the tombs of Muslim saints. This should be expected in Iraq, where the aim will be to provoke conflict between Sunnis and Shias, which the Wahhabis will present to the world as Shia aggression against the Sunni minority. This will increase support for the Wahhabis among Sunnis but open the door to Iranian military intervention to defend the Shias—the worst possible outcome. Such was the strategy the Wahhabis used against the Shia Hazara minority in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. It produced massive bloodshed and nearly drew Iran into war with the Afghan regime.

In Iraq, several Sunni and Sufi leaders have expressed alarm at Wahhabi incursions and are prepared to sit down with the American authorities. All of them are in the sights of the terrorists and need immediate protection. In the United States, Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, long known for his denunciation of extremism, has maintained contact with these individuals through the Islamic Supreme Council of America (ISCA). Kabbani, who has a following throughout the Muslim world, has indicated his willingness to go to Iraq to promote a Sunni coalition of Arabs and Kurds dedicated to moderation, peace, and social equality.

When coalition troops come under fire in places like Fallujah, it cannot be assumed that local grievances are the essential explanation. There is a scheme to defeat the American intervention, and it originates in Saudi Arabia. It can be thwarted, with the help of local Muslim leaders. But first the coalition authorities have to take a closer look at who their enemy is. ♦

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A GOP House Divided

George W. Bush vs. Tom DeLay on the child tax credit. BY FRED BARNES

THE WHITE HOUSE and House majority leader Tom DeLay went eyeball to eyeball on tax cuts, and the White House blinked. Sure, that's a bit of an exaggeration. But the truth is President Bush did back down last week from his demand that the House approve child tax credit payments to non-income taxpayers, as the Senate had already done. Instead, the House went its own way, passing a larger tax bill that includes child tax credits for non-taxpayers and taxpayers alike. There was little to be gained politically from adding broader tax cuts, a presidential aide said. But that's what the House ultimately did anyway.

Bush and DeLay don't disagree very often. House Republicans are usually the congressional vanguard of the Bush presidency. They are relied on to pass the president's initiatives, then pressure the Senate to do the same. But on making the child tax credit "refundable" to households in the $10,000 to $26,500 income range, the Senate acted first. In fact, there is nothing to refund since most of these taxpayers pay no federal income tax. But they would be sent checks as if they did. Democrats and all but two Senate Republicans decided this is only fair. The White House went along, hoping to move quickly to Medicare reform and a prescription drug benefit for senior citizens. Medicare would give the president what he lacks: a domestic policy triumph other than tax cuts to brag about, an ornament for his reelection campaign next year.

DeLay, House majority whip Roy Blunt, and chairman Bill Thomas of the House Ways and Means Committee didn't want to take up the tax credit proposal at all. "Welfare" is what House Republicans called it, noting that the Congressional Budget Office, the Joint Tax Committee, and the White House Office of Management and Budget all score the "refund" as spending, not a loss of tax revenue.

Tom DeLay

Earl Keleny

But Democrats were on the warpath, claiming Republicans had cruelly denied low income families the child tax credit when it was increased only weeks earlier. Democrats, DeLay felt, were merely trying to provide a payoff for their constituents under the guise of aiding "the children." Even when the Senate approved the payments to non-taxpayers in a $10 billion tax bill in early June, DeLay and his allies remained reluctant. They don't fear tax refunds for folks who pay no income taxes as an effective issue for Democrats.

The White House doesn't either, but it didn't want to get bogged down on the issue as Medicare beckoned. On June 9, press secretary Ari Fleischer said the House should hastily pass the Senate bill. Fleischer acknowledged the tax credit is "really an assistance program to help low income workers." But he also said it would operate just like the Earned Income Tax Credit, offsetting the Social Security taxes paid even by people who don't owe income tax.

On June 10, Bush met in the White House residence with bipartisan leaders from Congress. The tax credit came up briefly. Bush said the House should pass the Senate bill. House Republican leaders replied they could pass a better bill. Bush said he'd be glad to take a look at it. The next day, Andy Card, the White House chief of staff, trekked to House speaker Dennis Hastert's office in the Capitol. DeLay and Blunt urged the White House to treat their proposal—extending the refunds to taxpayers *and* non-taxpayers—as kindly as the president had the Senate bill. Card was noncommittal. But as the House was debating the $82 billion measure on June 12, the president sent a statement endorsing passage of the bill and seeking a quick agreement afterwards with the Senate

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on a compromise version. The White House had caved.

DeLay, Blunt, and company are not in the mood to compromise. "We're going to hold our ground," DeLay says. For one thing, he's not inclined to accommodate squishy Senate moderates. And House Republicans have a strong hand to play because they don't care if a bill with refunds for non-taxpayers passes at all. No bill would be "fine" with conservatives, says Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, a key Republican on tax issues. So, in conference, DeLay intends to push the Senate to go with the House bill or face the prospect of no bill at all. The House bill's price tag, by the way, is sizable because it broadens the child tax credit to cover higher-income taxpayers and extends it to 2010. Under current law, as well as in the Senate bill, it expires in 2004.

Two other players should be mentioned, the Democratic party and Karl Rove. Democrats were in high dudgeon during the House debate, charging Republicans with hurting children. Democratic representative Jim McDermott, a fanatical Bush and Republican hater, trotted out a gimmick in the House debate. He appeared with a large rubber stamp and a poster saying the House under Republican rule exists for the sole purpose of rubber-stamping Bush's wishes. That Republicans were bucking Bush this time was lost on him.

As for Rove, the normal assumption in Washington is that, see him or not, he's deeply involved in every issue and every policy. But this time he didn't lobby anyone on Capitol Hill. His regular Wednesday breakfast at the White House with Blunt was cancelled last week because he was out of town. Notice the location of the breakfast. Rove meets with congressional Republicans at the White House. Andy Card, on the other hand, has to travel to Capitol Hill. ♦

Road Rage

Terror shreds the road map.

BY TOM ROSE

Jerusalem

THE ONLY PARTIES who seemed the least bit surprised that the road map got bogged down in a new wave of Palestinian terrorism and Israeli responses were the plan's American and European sponsors. While Western diplomats professed shock, neither Israelis nor Palestinians missed a beat.

Traffic on Jerusalem's Jaffa Road was fully restored less than three hours after 16 people were killed on Wednesday, June 11, by an 18-year-old Palestinian suicide murderer. In his pre-mission video, the young killer said he was acting at the behest of Hamas leader Abdul Aziz Rantisi, the lucky survivor of an unsuccessful Israeli Air Force missile strike the day before. Some restaurants into which body parts of victims had been blown even made a determined effort to reopen Wednesday night, so as to serve customers equally determined to patronize them.

None of the most influential supporters of the road map, the latest blueprint for Middle East peace, bothered to notice that virtually no one who actually lives here, be he Israeli or Palestinian, hawk or dove, believed the scheme had more than a remote chance of success. On the other hand, if half a century of failure to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict didn't dissuade the road map's advocates from giving the same old approach yet another college try, why should a bunch of local skeptics?

Like so many plans before it, the road map demands that Israel take concrete risks for peace while asking Palestinians merely to restate unfulfilled promises. But unlike earlier peace initiatives, the road map doesn't bother asking the Arab states to renounce the war to destroy Israel that they started on the day of Israel's birth in 1948 and have never ended.

And so Secretary of State Colin Powell reacted to the June 11 massacre not by calling for reevaluation or even a pause, but rather by seeking still more Israeli concessions. "We must not let this latest terrorist outrage derail the path to peace," he said in Washington.

What really threatens to derail the process, however, is Washington's failure to understand the predicament of its favored Palestinian leader—the new prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas. He is the figure now called upon to insure implementation of Palestinian commitments under the road map. To put it bluntly, if Abbas fails, the road map fails.

Yet how can Abbas succeed? He is a powerless figurehead, threatened by

Tom Rose is publisher of the Jerusalem Post.

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Getty / Quique Kierszenbaum

Emergency workers surround the wreckage of the bus blown up in Jerusalem on June 11.

Hamas leaders who openly call for his murder, while Yasser Arafat works both publicly and behind the scenes to undermine him. Arafat calls Abbas a "traitor to the Palestinian cause." The hard truth is that, had Israel succeeded in eliminating Hamas mastermind Rantisi, it would have done far more to help Mahmoud Abbas than George Bush has done.

That's what made President Bush's condemnation of Israel's failed attempt to kill the Hamas leader so worrying. Forget the apparent hypocrisy of his criticizing Israel at the very moment U.S. forces were engaged in a much larger and deadlier counterterror operation in Iraq. More important, Hamas is as much a threat to Abbas as it is to Israel. Failure to recognize that undermines the very peace plan the president has so publicly embraced. For unless the United States backs real Palestinian regime change, Mahmoud Abbas stands exposed to his people as powerless.

A year ago, on June 24, 2002, President Bush shocked the diplomatic world by calling for the Palestinians to "choose" a new leadership "not compromised by terror." Implicitly, he was calling on them to replace Yasser Arafat.

By the time the road map was finally released earlier this year, Bush's demand for Palestinian "regime change" had been watered down to the appointment of a Palestinian prime minister without the removal of Arafat. Abbas took office in May, but he has floundered ever since. In the period leading up to last week's mayhem, Abbas had command of not a single Palestinian police officer, and therefore neither arrested a single terrorist nor confiscated a single illegal weapon.

In a concession to Israel, the Americans insisted that Prime Minister Abbas and not Arafat be the Palestinian official responsible for implementing the road map. Yet to succeed, Abbas needs much more than pronouncements of support. He needs power, and at present what little he has is rapidly slipping through his fingers.

To crack down on terror, Abbas needs control of the Palestinian Interior Ministry, yet that ministry remains firmly in Arafat's hands. To stop the incitement to violence, Abbas needs control of the communications and education ministries, which are likewise controlled by Arafat. Far from helping his former deputy, Arafat is now orchestrating a bloodcurdling incitement campaign against him in the Palestinian media. But most important, Abbas needs the destruction of terrorist organizations like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Arafat's own Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade. By condemning Israel's attempt to do just that, George Bush risks pulling the rug out from under Abbas's feet and dooming the road map and the peace process. ♦

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Nukes on the Loose

Time for a new nonproliferation regime.

BY HENRY SOKOLSKI

THE UNITED STATES has only begun to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. This is the core message of George W. Bush's May 31 speech in Krakow, where he announced his intent to work with like-minded states to interdict nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to carry them. For the moment, his initiative will concentrate on harmonizing the interdiction laws of our friends. In trying to develop common rules of what goods are illicit, though, the need for more generalized rules will quickly become apparent.

Henry Sokolski is executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center and author of Best of Intentions: America's Campaign Against Strategic Weapons Proliferation *(Praeger, 2001).*

What most cries out for attention are the disturbing loopholes in our existing nonproliferation efforts. North Korea recently threatened to transfer its nuclear weapons. Yet, because Pyongyang withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), it can now legally export its nuclear capabilities. And if North Korea or Pakistan (which has never signed the NPT) wants to redeploy some of its nuclear weapons to a country that has signed the treaty, it need only claim that the weapons are still under its control. The recipient—a Libya or a Saudi Arabia—could then take delivery (just as Germany has done from the United States) without violating any NPT rules.

Then, there is the problem of Iran. Assuming Moscow proceeds with its construction and fueling of Iran's Busheir reactor, Tehran in 25 to 30 months will have all the nuclear material it needs to break out with scores of nuclear arms in a matter of weeks. Even if Russia cut off its aid to Iran, Tehran already has enough nuclear technology to make a bomb by 2006. How did this happen? Iran acquired most of its nuclear capabilities covertly, and, yet, was able to do so, for the most part, without violating the nonproliferation treaty. Now Syria, Egypt, and other nations see Iran as a possible model for legally acquiring a nuclear option of their own. In addition, any nation, including Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, Iraq, or Iran, can export items critical to making weapons of mass destruction without violating any international law.

Trying to close these loopholes country by country can help, but it's hardly sufficient. Determined proliferators will cheat or refuse to cooperate. That's why an enforceable international prohibition on trafficking in weapons of mass destruction needs to be created, like those already in place against piracy and slave trading. Any nation's attempt to redeploy chemical, nuclear, or biological warheads outside of its borders or to ship the key means to make them should be deprived the protection of international law. This would allow nations that oppose proliferation to search or seize the illicit freight of violators with or *without* their consent, wherever they are, outside of friendly ports or even on the high seas. Like piracy and trading in slaves, trade in weapons of mass destruction would make one an

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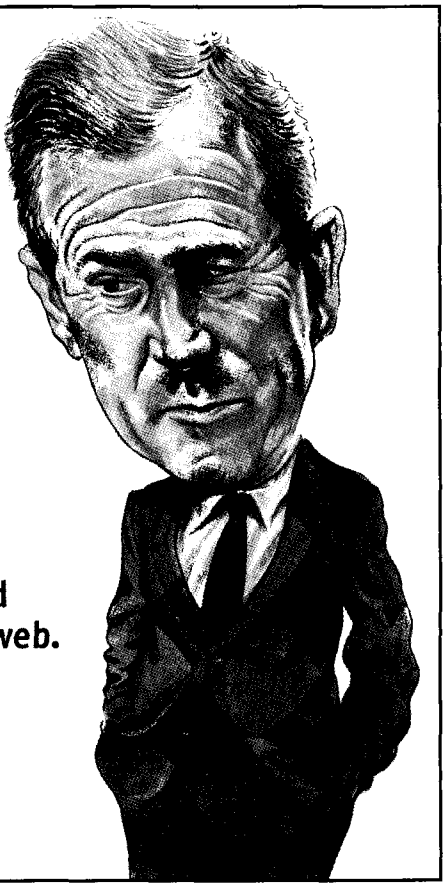

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Trafficking in weapons can be dealt with as piracy once was.

outlaw—i.e., subject to the enforcing action of any law-abiding citizen.

How could this be done? The key ingredients needed to make strategic weapons are already internationally recognized. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) lists all special nuclear materials. The Australia Group catalogs key chemical and biological weapons-related items. The Nuclear Suppliers Group identifies critical dual-use nuclear gear and prohibits the export of enrichment and reprocessing plants, and the Missile Technology Control Regime does the same for cruise and ballistic missiles. Meanwhile, U.S. law requires American businesses to pre-announce most of these exports publicly. Several friendly nations have similar laws. These practices should help in creating the international common usage that's required.

To begin, we should work with our friends, as the president suggested, and shore up our own laws where needed. What should come next? First, all nations should give prior public notification of their export of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons-related items. As the number of cooperating nations grows, so too will pressures for those not participating to comply. The price for noncompliance should be clear: Any transfer that is not properly pre-announced should be subject to interdiction.

Second, no nation should be allowed any longer in peacetime to redeploy nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons outside its borders. This rule is one the United States, with its various submarine-launched ballistic and cruise missile systems, long range bombers, air-launched cruise missiles, and sea-based strike aircraft, can easily live with. Any nation violating this rule, whether friendly (e.g., Pakistan) or not (e.g., North Korea), should, again, be subject to interdiction.

Finally, if there is support for stronger action, exports made outside the procedures of the IAEA, Australia Group, Nuclear Suppliers Group, and (perhaps) the Missile Technology Control Regime might be banned and targeted for interdiction. This rule would clearly put a bind on nonmembers of these organizations. It would apply not just to Iran, which has announced its desire to export its nuclear expertise, but to China, North Korea, and Pakistan, who trade in nuclear and missile technology. It also could include Israel, which has exported missile technology to China, and India, a state that announced a military cooperative agreement with Iran and its intent to export missile technology internationally.

Once agreement is reached on one or more of these rules, the United States or a like-minded nation should submit them to the U.N. Security Council for adoption. It should be made clear, however, that if any nation learns of an export that violates the proposed rules before the U.N. puts the proposal to a vote, that nation should still try to block the export or pass the information it has on to a state that can. After our experience waiting on the U.N. to act on Iraq, we should not leave the world's security hostage to delay.

Two other new rules would be useful. First, the United States and its friends should announce that states that violate or withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty have no right to the atomic technology they have accumulated as signatories, since they acquired it under the false pretense of its being dedicated to peaceful purposes. Only nations that have not acquired the means to make nuclear weapons should think they can withdraw from the NPT without paying a price. Everyone else, including North Korea or its imitators, should be forewarned.

Second, the United States should insist—as it has now begun to do in the case of Iran—that a proper reading of the NPT will no longer allow states that join without weapons to get everything they need to break out in weeks to have an entire arsenal. For at least the next few decades, there is no legitimate reason for any state to separate plutonium chemically from spent fuel, or to continue to use or make highly enriched uranium. Anyone building new plants to do so, like North Korea or Iran, should simply be seen as developing bombs. This should put such states outside of the treaty and, again, of the protections of international law. ♦

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The Next Great American Newspaper

Replacing the New York Times

By David Gelernter

Roughly six years ago I gave a talk at a D.C. think tank complaining that it was outrageous for the conservative community (that vigorous, virile young beast) to allow New York City to subsist on the thin gruel of the *New York Times Book Review* and the *New York Review of Books*, both left of center. Don't books matter? Doesn't critical opinion at the center of the publishing (not to say the cultural) world count? The *Times Book Review* feels its responsibility and tries to be fair—I don't know whether a conservative weekly would try as hard—but it is what it is. The fault lies not in the *Times* but in ourselves. If conservative thinkers and tycoons cared a tenth as much about culture as they do about politics, the situation would have been Righted decades ago. Response to my talk was reassuring: Good idea, important! But relax, everything is under control. The problem was gone into years ago by experts and found to be insoluble.

Times have changed. For a generation this country has needed a whole new set of institutions, and today they are finally (albeit obliquely) arriving and taxiing in. Talk radio has been solid for years. Fox News (which has ties to this magazine too numerous to disclose) assaulted dug-in cultural positions from an unexpected direction—and suddenly a New Generation of Americans (my own boys, for example) were watching TV news. I'd thought TV news was dead. And a few weeks ago, The Weekly Standard itself addressed ground zero of American culture by calling for a new daily newspaper in this country. "We need, and deserve, a great daily newspaper. . . . Careful and truthful, lively and unpompous, confident and not smug—and, of course, fair, balanced, and unafraid. Who will found it?"

It *can* happen and is bound to. The conservative editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal* is a vital asset, but Manhattan was always intended for a *Times and* a *Herald Tribune*—one Democratic Alpha Male newspaper and one Republican. (There is also the new and first-rate *Sun*; more below.) But the *Herald Tribune* died nearly 40 years ago—of labor trouble, not lack of readers. That it has never been replaced is one of the strangest, saddest anomalies of modern cultural history. (And yet not *that* strange; rather all too typical of the Establishment's favorite response to the challenges of the 1960s—roll over and die.)

America's next great newspaper is a wonderful idea—but it will have to be published on the web and not on paper, and as a new style web newspaper, not one of today's conventional web-based losers. It is coming—and (in the nature of things) it will redefine the news story *and* the newspaper.

Why on the web and not on newsprint? It's much cheaper to produce and distribute that way, and your distribution network puts you, automatically, in homes all over the world. The web is a medium young readers can manage. Young people don't read newspapers; chances are they don't even know how. But they know how to play with computers. (Possibly this is the only thing they *do* know. Or almost the only.) And, most important: A newspaper sells timeliness if it sells anything. The idea that newspapers can no longer compete in the "fresh news" market because of all-news cable channels is silly; radio has been delivering bulletins for eighty years, but people continued to read newspapers anyway, for as long as they were worth reading. Because a web-paper is a "virtual" object made of software, capable of changing by the microsecond, lodged inside a computer where fresh data pour in constantly at fantastic rates, a web-paper can be the timeliest of them all—and it can be a *great* paper if it plays to its natural advantages and delivers timeliness with style.

Why a "new style" web newspaper and not today's style? Because today's web-papers are wedge-ins, stopgaps, crack fillers, with all the character of putty in a plas-

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tic spritz-tube; people read them not for pleasure and illumination but to extract a necessary fact or kill time when they are stuck at their desks. Their builders don't seem to have grasped what makes the newsprint newspaper one of design history's greatest achievements. (Do they ever *read* a newspaper?) No web newspaper will match all of newsprint's best qualities, but web designers should *understand* those qualities so they can concoct new ones that are (in their ways) equally attractive. The mere timid transfer of newsprint-style newspapers to the web—standard operating procedure today—is bound to yield failure, just as primitive movies *had* to be boring so long as directors merely pointed their cameras at a stage and slurped up Broadway plays. Movies needed their own, new ways to tell a story. Web newspapers do too.

The average web newspaper's biggest problem nowadays is the problem of nearly all websites: They are boring, as vastly useful and dull as the computer itself. If "America's next great newspaper" is a web-paper, it must (nonetheless) draw your fascinated attention; make you itch to tune in. It must be interesting to *watch*—not a pint-sized bulletin board like today's websites, where (occasionally) someone tacks up something new, with dancing cartoon-ads thrown in to drive you crazy; instead like a porthole you look *through* to an intriguing, ever-changing scene on the far side. It should work equally well as a newspaper or as news radio that reads itself aloud, following your simple voice commands. It should be capable of slipping smoothly and naturally off the screen into something more comfortable, the printed page.

In technology terms, it is all surprisingly easy.

Nothing on this wish list detracts from the brand new, newsprint *New York Sun*—long may it prosper. For all I know, "America's next great newspaper" *is* the *Sun*—but on the web. (It's on the web today, of course—but in conventional antique style.)

Space is newsprint's domain; time is the web's. As an ordinary thing-in-space, the newsprint newspaper will always be the better, more convenient object; the web-paper is a mere slippery goldfish behind the glass of your computer screen—you can peer at it, and handle it by remote control. (Study a menu, inch the cursor around, press a numb-feeling mouse-button. Computers are obnoxiously fussy.)

As an object-in-*time* the web-paper will be king, if we let it be—but what kind of object is that? If a still photo is an object in space, a parade seen from a fixed location is an object in time—its grand marshal two hours in the past, its rear end 20 minutes into the future. And (it just so happens) the news *is* a parade, it is a March of Time (Time-Life's famous newsreel series), a sequence of events—and thus perfect for a (new style) web newspaper. How can history's parade (or *any* parade) not be interesting? A proper web-paper will be a parade of reports, each materializing in the present and marching off into the past.

A newsprint paper is a slab of space (even a closed tabloid is larger than most computer screens) that is *browsable* and *transparent*. Browsability is what a newspaper is for: to offer readers a smorgasbord of stories, pictures, ads and let them choose what looks good. "Transparent" means you can always tell from a distance what you're getting into (Are there lots of pages here or not many? Important news today or nothing much?)—and you always know (as you read) where you are, how far you've come, and how much is left. The newsprint paper is an easy, comfortable, unfussy object. You can turn to the editorials, flip to the back page, or pull out the sports section without thinking. It's light and simple and cheap: Spread it on the breakfast table and spill coffee on it, read it standing in a subway or flat on your back on sofa or lawn, on the beach or in bed. You can write on it, cut it up, pull it apart, fold it open to an interesting story, and stick it (folded) in your pocket to show to someone later. These small details add up to brilliant design.

A web-paper could be a first-rate "object in time"—but today's are cut-rate conventional papers instead, imitation newsprint. Today's typical web-paper is like a newsprint paper where you can only see one midget-sized page at a time, and can never touch it—someone holds it in front of your face. You have no idea how many more pages there are, or how the pages are arranged. Since you can never *touch* the thing, you are constantly issuing finicky little orders: Turn the page, show me the arts section, make that damned ad stop blinking.

Today's web-papers offer one main advantage over newsprint: They let you search. But how often do newsprint readers *want* to search, or need to? They know where to find what they want; anyway, they mainly browse. They want to be distracted, enlightened, entertained. First law of information: *browsing trumps searching.* But (second law)—effective browsing is *visual* browsing, what you do when you pick two interesting magazines out of thousands at a newsstand; or read a newsprint paper and let a photo, headline, ad, or cartoon catch your eye.

The web-papers of tomorrow should be "objects in time," and here is the picture. Imagine a parade of jumbo index cards standing like set-up dominoes. On your computer display, the parade of index cards stretches into the simulated depths of your screen, from the middle-bottom (where the front-most card stands, looking big) to the farthest-away card in the upper left corner (looking small). Now, something happens: Tony Blair makes a speech. A

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new card materializes in front (a report on the speech) and everyone else takes a step back—and the farthest-away card falls off the screen and (temporarily) disappears. So the parade is in constant motion. New stories keep popping up in front, and the parade streams backwards to the rear.

Each card is a "news item"—text or photo, or (sometimes) audio or video. "Text" could mean an entire conventional news story or speech or interview. But the pressure in this medium is away from the long set-piece story, towards the continuing series of lapidary paragraphs. There's room on a "news card" for a headline, a paragraph and a small photo. (If the news item is a long story or transcript, only the opening fits on the card—but you can read the whole thing if you want to, by clicking the proper mouse-buttons.)

So: a moving parade (or flowing stream) of news items—new ones constantly arriving in front, older ones moving back. (Actually it's one long parade reaching back to the newspaper's founding; you can rewind it like videotape.) You can only see one full card at a time; the others are partially hidden by cards in front. But you can guess what's on the partially hidden cards, because you can see their top edges and left margins. And when you touch a card with the cursor, a complete version pops up instantaneously. The news stream uses foreshortening to make the most of screen space: One glance encompasses the most recent 20 or 30 postings, the latest quarter-hour to several hours of news, depending on the world's pulse at the moment and your preferences.

Everything on every card is indexed, everything is searchable should you care to search—the news parade is (equivalently) an "information beam" you can focus as precisely as you like. Type "Tony Blair" and you get a Tony beam—still a moving stream edging backwards into the sunset, but all Tony, all the time.*

Most important, the news story itself is redefined. Today's standard news story is a monolithic slab of text, updated a few times perhaps and then plopped into the archives.

It is an odd bastard at best, a triumph of efficiency and marketing over literary logic. It is radically front-loaded; it starts with its most interesting sentence and then tapers (line by line) to a sharp point of boredom, losing momentum with every paragraph—thus a spike-shaped monstrosity perfectly formed for its mission, to be pounded like a piton into the rock wall of a reader's indifference.

The new style news story is a string of short pieces interspersed with photos, transcripts, statements, and whatnot as they emerge: It is an evolving chain; you can pick it up anywhere and follow it back into the past as far as you like.

Instead of writing one longish piece, reporters will write (say) five short ones—will belt out little stories all the time, as things happen. They will shape their news stories to the shape of the news, of experience, of time. The string of aphorisms—prose in stanzas—is a perfect form for fresh and timely news. Perfect also for a nation where concentration spans seem to halve every year. Yet (on the other hand) it is no accident that two of the three greatest writers of modern times should have loved writing aphorisms. (Freud didn't, but Nietzsche and Wittgenstein did.) Not a bad way to write, not by any means.

The news story is a spike-shaped monstrosity perfectly formed for its mission: to be pounded like a piton into the wall of a reader's indifference.

You can read this news stream, or switch it to autopilot and (following your simple commands, if you're driving a car, say, or lying around) it will read to *you*. Eventually the web paper will migrate from the web server to your own computer. The main office e-mails you each new "card"; software on your computer receives each new arrival, indexes it, adds it to the moving parade. Now (by the way) you can read many newspapers simultaneously; each sends you its own stream of cards, and your local software shuffles them together in time-order. (Yes, you can already arrange to receive news updates by e-mail—but without the right kind of display, you have nothing. Third law of information: The interface *is* the application. The right picture is everything.)

Takes up lots of space on your computer, right? All those "news cards"? Requires lots of computing power to operate this fancy display? Absolutely. But the high expense (and good performance) of the eventual on-your-desktop version is a feature, not a bug. The industry (after all) has a problem: Each new PC generation arrives on your desktop equipped with vaster and vaster, emptier and emptier closets for information you don't own and couldn't locate if you did; the per-bit cost of storing data is

*You can see (sort of) what this looks like at a website where commercial software I helped build for a somewhat different purpose is on display (*scopeware.com*). But my point is the principle, not the product.

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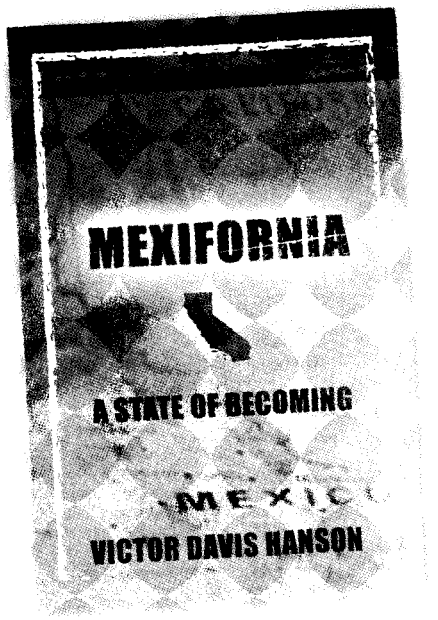
near zero already, and the question is what to *do* with all that storage space. *And* each new PC generation arrives with faster and faster processor chips, which spend more and more of their time doing nothing. Eventually people are likely to notice, and start asking questions. "Why do I need a new computer? What's wrong with the old one? What important thing will the new one do that the old one can't do just as well?" At which point the computer industry as we know it will start falling apart. The tycoon who founds America's next great newspaper will help save the computer industry too.

And it would be so damned *easy* to found, it's almost painful.

I live north of New Haven in the middle of the Great Suburb (a global feature, like the Amazon or Sahara) that covers the northeast and plays a big role in setting the nation's cultural mood. Around here we set out food for the birds, and the *New York Times* sets out information for us. People nibble at it without enjoying themselves or pondering over much. Mostly it never occurs to them that the *Times* is slanted, because the *Times* is the rock-solid floor of their world, it *defines* horizontal. (Thus Dan Rather's celebrated observation—which must have cracked up Sulzberger and his editors—that the *Wall Street Journal* is right-wing but the *Times* is middle-of-the-road.) Of course the *Times* is, in reality, too big and varied to be condemned as just "slanted," period—there are plenty of *Times* reporters whose integrity is absolute—but its national and world news coverage *is* slanted and getting slantier. Yet here in the Great Suburb, no one will give up the *Times* until an attractive alternative presents itself. I do hear more disapproving murmurs than I used to—but only because of the newspaper's ever more blatant anti-Israel tone—which, however, people take for mere bigotry; they've seen it all before. They rarely ask themselves whether such bigotry might not be part of a larger infection incubated on the editorial page and now spreading up and down the narrow airless news columns, making the whole paper mildly feverish today—and delirious tomorrow.

Yet things could change for the *Times* as fast as they did for the networks once cable TV started to grab. One day CBS was on top of the world, next day it was muttering darkly about strategies for survival. Things happen. ♦



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The Unimperial Empire

Dispatch from a quiet outpost of Pax Americana.

By Sean McMeekin

Ankara

So Niall Ferguson, nostalgic neoimperialist historian from the mother country, has moved to America. And in a flurry of essays in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*, he has announced his mission: giving "lessons" to yellow Yanks in the arts of "Empire," as he titled his most recent book.

He's not the first. Ever since Rudyard Kipling urged Americans to take up the White Man's Burden, pained prophets of Britain's declining global influence have been projecting their imperial fantasies onto America, only to be disappointed by our perennial reluctance to carry them out. Already the chorus has begun over Washington's presumed desire to abandon Baghdad soon after conquering it. As Ferguson, now teaching at New York University's Stern school of business, recently declaimed in the *New York Times Magazine* with characteristic condescension, "today's 'wannabe' imperialists in the United States" are already asking, "'So—can we, like, go home now?'" By contrast, he continued, "when the British went into Iraq, they stuck around."

Well, pardon my English, but why exactly should Americans colonize Iraq in the same way the British did? Last time I checked, London seemed to have botched the job up pretty good there, playing footsie-for-oil with corrupt Sunni minority tyrants only too eager to lord it over majority Shias, plus the Kurds, Christians, and Turkmen. This is not to mention the festering geopolitical sores of Cyprus, Kashmir, Palestine, Northern Ireland, and much of contemporary Africa, which seem likewise to have British colonial footprints all over them.

Without going too deeply into the tragic fallout of London's policy of "divide and quit" (a phrase recently given new currency by a more sanguine English expatriate, journalist Christopher Hitchens), let us at least agree that the legacy of the British Foreign Office around the world is mixed. Cricket and common law caught on fairly well in a few Commonwealth countries in Asia and the Americas, but conspicuously less so in the more volatile regions of Africa and the Middle East, where the Brits are not always remembered so fondly.

Does America really require a colonial service? Need we design sharp khaki uniforms, snappy salutes, punchy titles?

The postwar American world order, meanwhile, now nearing the end of its sixth decade, seems to be plodding along pretty well, despite Americans' lackadaisical approach to global governance. And this seems to drive Britcons like Ferguson crazy. Unlike the Oxbridge scions of old, he laments, "America's brightest and best aspire not to govern Mesopotamia, but to manage MTV." Surveying the halls of the Ivy League, he finds no stirrings, even post-9/11, of a "new imperial elite" in the making. Who will govern Iraq? "You simply cannot have an empire," he concludes, "without imperialists."

Et tu, Britannicus? Does America really require a colonial service? Need we design sharp khaki uniforms, snappy salutes, punchy titles? Should we ask universities to close down study-abroad centers in friendly, rich countries and give credits only to students who learn the art of the cold shower and the stiff

Sean McMeekin teaches international relations at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey. His first book, The Red Millionaire: A Political Biography of Willy Munzenberg, Moscow's Secret Propaganda Tsar in the West, *is forthcoming from Yale University Press.*

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upper lip in difficult Third World climates? Must our values become Victorian, so that we truly civilize the world's backward regions, instead of merely flooding them with mass-marketed pop culture?

As a fairly highbrow American expat academic myself who speaks a number of foreign languages, I am not so sure this is a good idea. Americans are already quite recognizable enough around the world in their casual approach to fashion, their assertive style of speech, not to mention their accents. The last thing we need is to draw more attention to ourselves. Like most unassuming American expat legionnaires—businessmen, economists, lawyers, English teachers, missionaries, Peace Corps activists, free-weekly editors, NGO staffers, and so on—I do not require an imperial uniform to promote American values abroad. Nor did I pass through a civil service feeder.

Bilkent's campus: The face of American imperialism?

The United States does have a foreign service bureaucracy with an entrance exam, of course—but Foggy Bottom is hardly where the action is. Many of the most effective cultural ambassadors for America are not even Americans, but rather foreigners who lived or studied in the United States before returning home to share their knowledge, often creating American-style clubs, organizations, or businesses. Just as London's Indian civil service employed natives educated at Oxbridge, so now American university graduates create wealth and generate cultural ferment when they return to their countries of origin. The difference today is that no one controls or organizes the process. Although the Pentagon clearly oversees global security, there is no comparable entity that administers the global civilization we might call the Pax Americana. Like the Internet, it largely runs itself.

Take my own humble outpost, Bilkent, a private, English-speaking university in Turkey founded in 1984. American undergraduates who come here on exchange programs feel themselves immediately at home. The semester terms are American, the grading is on the A-to-F scale, and the course catalog shows offerings nearly indistinguishable from those back home (except for the strong department in Turkish literature and classes in Turkish law). There are even class evaluation forms for students to grade their professors, a practice previously unheard of in traditional Turkish culture, where the authority of teachers and parents remains strong.

Bilkent is also a real campus, set off from nearby Ankara, with its own private security detail, dormitories, and special faculty housing. There are no less than two campus gyms, with American nautilus equipment, basketball and squash courts, aerobics classes, the works. There's even a bowling team, for crying out loud. Most of all, there is green grass everywhere, landscaped walkways between classes, and even a central "green" fronting the main faculty building on which students linger, socialize, and play football—not merely soccer but sometimes even the pigskin variety. All this, in the middle of the Anatolian desert.

So American does Bilkent seem to the casual observer that campus officials are inundated with complaints from a certain type of busybody that they are doing Washington's bidding in Turkey. But here's the rub. Bilkent is *not* American, neither founded nor financed nor run by Americans. There are no more than a token minority of Yanks on the faculty. There aren't even any Americans on the "American football" team—which seems to have been created by some Turks who learned the game when they lived in the United States. (In fact, when I happened upon a scrimmage one day, they were so flattered by the attention of a real American, they promptly invited me to play.) Plus there's the bowling team—sponsored by a Turkish beer-brewing company (Efes), although at a recent scrimmage I didn't see any of the serious young Turkish bowlers, or even their student supporters, drinking any. Imagine that in the Big Ten.

Then there's the delightful Turkish cuisine in the campus eateries, prepared and served by adults who take pride in their work, instead of by bored, indifferent, overpaid American undergraduates working off their financial aid. Bilkent humor is refreshingly empty of tired jokes about bad cafeteria food, because, well, there isn't any.

Complaints of certain Turkish Islamist critics notwithstanding, Bilkent is simply not in league with some mythical American imperialist conspiracy. It was founded by Ihsan Dogramaci, an enigmatic Turkish cos-

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mopolitan who speaks some 28 languages, American-accented English not particularly conspicuous among them. If Dogramaci chose an American-style academic system, it may have something to do with the fact that his son Ali, an engineering professor who also serves as rector, received his graduate degrees from Columbia and Stanford (Ali also taught at Columbia). But mostly it's because the system is a good one, recognized around the world.

Bilkent is not alone. There are already 24 private universities in Turkey, including Koc and Sabanci in Istanbul, which, like Bilkent, were founded by rich philanthropists whose vision would have impressed Leland Stanford. Not all of these schools are English-instruction only, but most require at least a year of intensive English, especially the technical universities.

And this is just the tip of the global iceberg. As David Cohen reported in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* two years ago, "in Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and throughout much of the developing world, private colleges now represent the fastest-growing area of postsecondary education." Some of these new schools have received loans from the World Bank—implying at least a tenuous political connection to Washington—but most have simply sprung up to meet seemingly insatiable demand.

World-weary consumerist ennui is profoundly American. Natives frequenting these haunts of global culture, by contrast, tend to enjoy their marvels without irony.

Unlike the famous old American universities of Beirut and Cairo, founded and staffed by Protestant missionaries, the new generation of American-style, tuition-heavy private colleges is more or less self-replicating. The reason they grow so fast is that students like them, and usually get jobs when they graduate—which means tuition-paying parents like them, too. In other words, they work.

The same can be said for American-style businesses, which have become so ubiquitous around the world as scarcely any longer to merit attention. Globe-trotting Americans think nothing these days of encountering everything from private express-mail companies and all-night copy shops to big-screen sports bars, Hard Rock Cafe and Planet Hollywood knock-offs, and edgy Internet cafes complete with interactive message boards. So taken for granted are such customer-service oriented companies that expats have already begun *complaining* about this "Americanization," even as they eagerly use them.

But then, world-weary consumerist ennui is itself profoundly American. Natives frequenting these haunts of global culture, by contrast, tend to enjoy their marvels without irony. Just go to a disco playing mainstream American pop music virtually anywhere in the world. Unlike at the "cooler" clubs in Manhattan where such things are passé, people will be singing happily along to the lyrics and dancing up a storm.

I noticed this immense irony gap soon after I began spending time in the former Soviet Union. Nearly all observers of post-Communist cities note the stark contrast between the surly service in dreary, Soviet-style offices, hotels, and restaurants and the cheerful alternative in the flashy new "Western" outfits, staffed by attractive young men and women who usually speak English with an American accent. Some Americans I know take a kind of masochistic pleasure at being abused in the Soviet-style facilities—an "exotic" experience you can only get in ex-Communist countries. There's even a word for this kind of dreary service: *sovok*.

But just try inviting a savvy, young local to one of these places. If you've grown up in a country deprived of the simplest consumer pleasures, you don't take things like working telephones, edible food, and clean tablecloths for granted.

It is true that this kind of customer-is-right Americanization has yet to trickle down beyond the oases of prosperity in the world's poorer regions. And of course, many countries (Turkey is a good example) have strong service traditions of their own, which have been not so much replaced by the arrival of American-style businesses as harmoniously augmented. But where American-style service is absent, that fact reflects not a cultural aversion to Americanization—merely the geographic limits of prosperity. Once consumers can afford American-style service and education, they demand it as a right.

This does not mean everyone on planet Earth will one day play baseball (although basketball does seem to be catching on just about everywhere it is tried). It does mean that a global elite whose size grows year by year, whether Latin American, European, Turk, Arab, or Asian, will insist that businesses and schools serve their needs, rather than the other way around. They will insist on various political and civic rights, including those of women. They will form volunteer organizations and sports leagues, orga-

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nize (often pointless) academic conferences, and come to demand all of these institutions as a necessary part of the social landscape.

Many, though by no means all of them, will have learned these habits in American universities. Some will learn them from others who visited the States, or will pick up the vibe from the Internet. Given one or two degrees of separation, a trend can blanket an entire region in a matter of weeks, before the local culture czars have even noticed, by which time it is already too late for them to object.

Quite probably, many of the most energetic exponents of Americanization in the new global elite will deny there is anything American about their activities. Some will even form organizations or political parties explicitly hostile to America—of a kind already cropping up in an Iraq newly liberated by Americans from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein.

And yet this sort of cut-and-thrust politics, too, will demonstrate the spread of the Pax Americana. The beauty of this non-system lies in its total flexibility, its lack of a centralized imperial administration that rewards its own and punishes the disloyal. The success or failure of American-style businesses, schools, organizations, or political regimes around the world will not be judged in some distant colonial office in Washington, but rather in the rough and tumble of the economic and political marketplace.

That's as it should be. Like most of my fellow Americans, I am proud of my country, and serve it happily, in my own way, without expecting so much as a pat on the back for my efforts. Let our brave soldiers, who risk their lives every day defending Western civilization, receive the medals. They deserve every accolade they get. And yet even our men and women in uniform seem to spurn undue rewards and recognition, preferring to serve their country quietly and efficiently only as long as needed, before going home.

Yes, American troops must stay the course in the Middle East, overawing the local strongmen until the Arab world returns to its senses and rejects terrorism. But it is not their job to establish a permanent ruling bureaucracy, or to teach the natives how to become Americans. If Arabs prefer soccer to our football, eat kebabs instead of hamburgers, drink Mecca Cola rather than Coke or Pepsi, join obnoxious anti-American political parties—even if democratic parliaments choose to impose sharia-like bans on alcohol or enforce Islamic dress codes—so be it. All that matters is that Arabs breathe enough freedom to concentrate their minds on such humble matters, once we have removed the tyrants who suffocate them.

If this be empire, then I'm all for it. Where can I sign up for my toga? ♦

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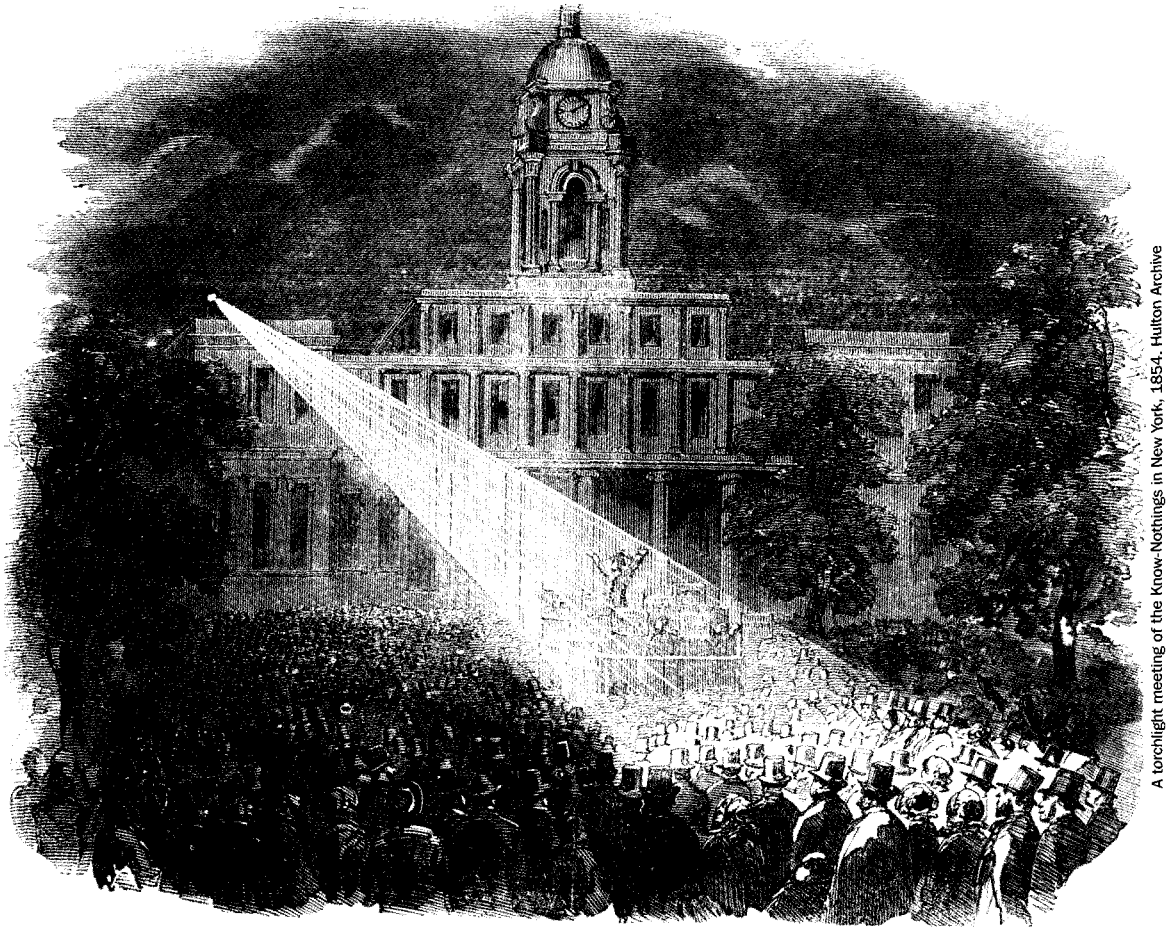

A torchlight meeting of the Know-Nothings in New York, 1854. Hulton Archive

The Papist Menace?

Philip Jenkins chronicles the last acceptable prejudice

By Justin Torres

The central claim of Philip Jenkins's newest book, *The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice*, is that nobody thinks much of insulting the Catholic Church. It has become widely acceptable, Jenkins persuades, to denounce the Church, its leadership and adherents, as sexually twisted, hypocritical, and power-hungry oppressors of women, gays, and minorities—all slanderous terms that would provoke outrage if directed at any non-Christian religious or ethnic group. What's even more striking, he adds, is "the completely casual way in which these views are stated, as if any normal person should be expected to share these beliefs."

Justin Torres is a writer and editor in Washington, D.C.

Jenkins makes some useful distinctions, in contrast to other watchdogs of anti-Catholicism who (somewhat understandably) possess more of a hair trigger. Satire of the Catholic Church, even devastatingly vicious satire, has a long and honorable history. *The Canterbury Tales* might get Chaucer arrested for hate crimes were it written today. Films such as Kevin Smith's *Dogma* or even the antics of the San Francisco gay group the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence seem to fit in this tradition. And portrayals of the failings of Catholic clerics or institutions—think of ABC's series *Nothing Sacred*—might make Catholics uncomfortable, but aren't necessarily anti-Catholic. Jenkins is at pains to distinguish himself from the uncompromising approach of groups such as William Donohue's Catholic League, and rightly so.

The New Anti-Catholicism
The Last Acceptable Prejudice
by Philip Jenkins
Oxford University Press, 272pp., $27

These useful distinctions make the book's litany of real anti-Catholicism all the more depressing. In art, theater, the news business, and political debate, Jenkins finds widespread anti-Catholic bigotry—and more importantly, widespread lack of concern about it. "What sometimes seems to be limitless social tolerance in modern America," Jenkins writes, "has strict limits where the Catholic Church is concerned."

Much of the bigotry Jenkins catalogues in *The New Anti-Catholicism* is quite juvenile—think of the Brooklyn Museum's show *Sensation*, with the

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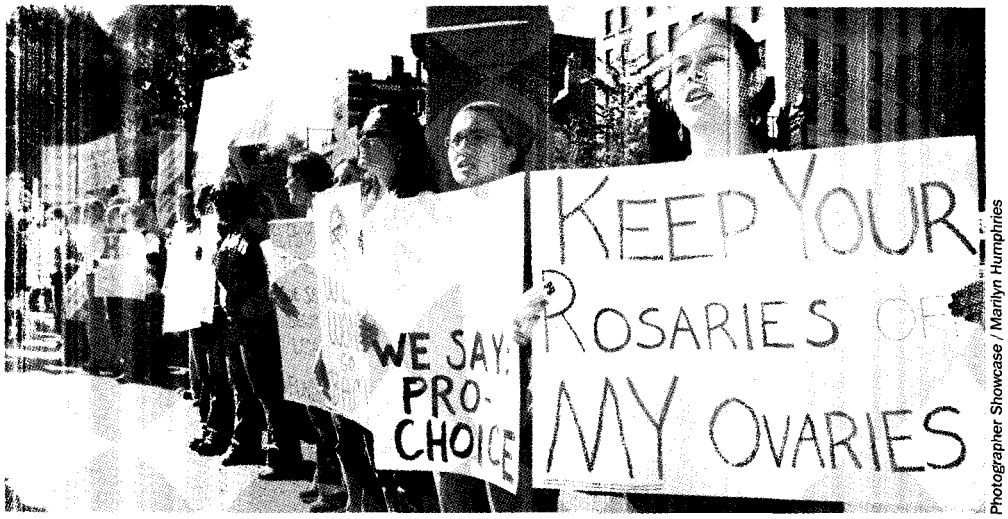

Photographer Showcase / Marilyn Humphries

dung-covered Virgin Mary. A good deal, however, is violent and perverse. In 2000, for example, Canadian feminists stormed the Cathedral of Marie-Reine-du-Monde in Montreal. Wearing ski masks, they disrupted Mass, spray-painted the altar with atheist slogans, threw condoms and soiled tampons around the sanctuary, and destroyed hundreds of hymnbooks and missals. Local authorities declined to press charges, saying they didn't want to get in the middle of a political debate.

Of course, anti-Catholicism goes way back in American history. Protestant colonizers feared Romish infiltration from Spain, while the Know-Nothings of the nineteenth century feared Catholics pouring in from Ireland, Italy, and Eastern Europe would take jobs away from native-born Protestants and prove unassimilable. In 1920, when Al Smith ran for president, Protestant preachers whipped up crowds with lurid fantasies in which Smith as president would take orders from the pope; a rumor even circulated that Smith planned to build a tunnel from the White House to the basement of the Vatican. As late as 1960, John F. Kennedy was forced to assure Protestants that the pope wouldn't be calling the shots on American foreign and domestic policy in his administration.

This type of anti-Catholicism has largely gone by the wayside, however, relegated to backwoods rabble-rousers. What has replaced it is an attack on the Church as a defender of traditional mores, especially sexual. Modern anti-Catholicism, Jenkins notes, derives its vigor from the Church's unique position as an international institution that presumes to intrude on political and cultural debates. Catholicism understands itself to be a comprehensive system, and acceptance of the doctrines of the Church has implications for how Catholics conduct both their spiritual and temporal affairs.

More important, the Catholic Church claims the right to speak authoritatively on modern social issues, and has not shrunk from debates over abortion, homosexuality, birth control, euthanasia, and cloning, among other issues. Advocates for these practices frequently find that their most formidable opponent is the Catholic Church, and accordingly direct their rhetorical fire.

The fact that modern anti-Catholic attacks often focus on the Church's teachings makes it difficult to distinguish between anti-Catholicism and opposition to Church teachings. Is there a difference between hating Catholics and hating the Catholic Church, and does that difference, well, make a difference? To put it another way: "No Irish Need Apply" is pretty straightforward discrimination, but is it in the same category as playwright Tony Kushner's characterization of the Church's hierarchy as "flagellants, fanatics, fundamentalists, and cynical political strategists whose utter lack of genuine spiritual inspiration and imagination, not to mention simple human compassion, is cloaked in inept, selective, antiquated misreadings of the Scriptures"?

Jenkins proposes two answers. The first is that regardless of any distinction between anti-Catholicism and opposition to the Church, it should make a difference that Catholicism is one of only a couple of institutions in America that can be the target of pure vitriol without inspiring condemnation or prosecution (evangelical Protestantism seems to be another). When Congressman Jim Moran bloviates about the Jewish lobby, or Senator Rick Santorum says that he opposes homosexuality, he is widely condemned. In contrast, when the group Queer Nation stages a mock crucifixion of a near-naked lesbian outside of Washington's Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, underneath a sign that reads "Christ Loves Women and Queers/Why Does O'Connor Hate Us?" the media remain unroiled.

More complex is his second answer. Catholicism, Jenkins notes, has never held that individual Catholics, even members of the clergy—including the pope—are immune from normal human failings. In fact, there is a long tradition of Catholics upbraiding their leaders for immoral or injudicious behavior. (St. Catherine of Siena once wrote of three heretical cardinals that their "stench . . . makes the whole world reek," and told the pope to his face to act like a man.) While the Church considers itself guided through history by the Holy Spirit, it is of course left to fallible men to enact the divine will.

So Catholicism can handle human failings, and the earthly Church exhibits those failings frequently. To point them out is not anti-Catholicism. Less defensible, however, is the suggestion that individual Catholics, or even the Church as a whole, fail *because* they are Catholic—that is, *because* of something in the nature of Catholicism that encourages unacceptable behavior. Jenkins gives a Jewish example to highlight what he means: Most observers would agree that it is one thing to criticize Israel or even to accuse it of serious crimes. It is another thing, and anti-Semitic, to suggest Israel does what it does because "that's the sort of thing that Jews will do." Similarly, it is bigotry to suggest that Catholicism itself accounts for the sins and failings of individual Catholics.

This attitude is most apparent in

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the recent priest scandals in the United States. Conservative and liberal Catholics alike both decried the behavior and called for resignations and reforms. Yet many observers pounced on the scandals as conclusive proof of the sickness of Catholic teaching on sexual ethics. No matter that Catholic doctrine clearly opposes sexual assault in all forms. To many people, the scandals demonstrated what they had long suspected—Catholicism perverts and deforms normal sexual desire, leading to criminal behavior. After all, what else could you expect from a Church that refuses to sanction homosexuality, contraception, and abortion, maintains an all-male, celibate priesthood, and defends traditional sexual values—that refuses, in short, to be honest and open about sex? A headline from *Slate* captured the sentiment perfectly: "Booty and the Priest: Does Abstinence Make the Church Grow Fondlers?"

Jenkins notes that such rhetoric echoes anti-Catholic attacks of earlier eras, when Protestant readers were titillated by semi-pornographic tales of sluttish nuns and lecherous priests. But today, anti-Catholic attacks are also battles in a larger social conflict over sexuality and the proper limits of human behavior. "The disproportionate reaction to the clergy abuse issue, the suggestions of pervasive criminality, cannot be understood except as a reflection of accumulated political grievances over other issues, involving sexuality and gender," writes Jenkins. Those who attacked the Church did so because they oppose the Church's teaching on sex, which is fair enough, and not necessarily a sign of bigotry.

What *is* anti-Catholic is the assertion that the Church's insistence on celibacy leads to rape. Scratch a priest, it is said, and you'll find a molester underneath. Accusations of that sort against any other ethnic or religious group would be considered a violation of the American values of inclusion and tolerance. After September 11, for example, the media, political leaders, and religious figures widely insisted there was no link between Islam and terrorist violence and, many times, tried to rule such discussion out of bounds.

On the matter of the priest scandals, however, some of the vitriol Jenkins identifies has less to do with the Church's teachings than with the betrayal felt by ordinary Catholics. Still, most post-scandal reform movements are simply repackaged versions of the same old groups that have been pushing for the liberalization of the Church for four decades. (The leadership of Voice of the Faithful, which formed in response to the scandals in New England, includes a number of prominent American Catholic dissenters.) And examples that Jenkins compiles give credence to his suggestion that, for many, the reaction to the priest scandals is not about righteous anger, but about bashing a church that remains a formidable obstacle to sexual revolution.

A similar phenomenon is at work in recent books and articles accusing the Catholic Church of institutional anti-Semitism. Working from a questionable, if not false, reading of the historical record, Daniel Goldhagen and James Carroll, among others, link the alleged anti-Semitism of particular Catholics directly to Catholic theology. Both make out lists of offending Catholic beliefs—the divinity of Christ, the Church's claim to universality, the efficacy of the Sacraments—that must be jettisoned to expiate the sin of institutional anti-Semitism. In other words, both demand that the Catholic Church abandon the very tenets that make it Catholic.

Jenkins is nothing if not comprehensive in laying out the examples that support his case, and there are times when *The New Anti-Catholicism* loses steam as a result. Fortunately, the author's calm and rigorous thinking saves it from ever feeling like a clip job. Jenkins is at his least convincing, however, when he poses "a kind of solution" at the very end of the book, arguing that writers should examine their work for unconscious anti-Catholic bias. This would certainly be welcome, but it seems likely that anti-Catholic bias as Jenkins identifies it will remain. Why? Because the Church will not abandon its beliefs, and anti-Catholic activists will settle for nothing less. From the collision of immovable objects and irresistible forces inevitably comes conflict and bias. ♦

Epic Historian

Shelby Foote and the American Civil War.

BY PETER AUGUSTINE LAWLER

Shelby Foote, now eighty-six, is a great American writer. Many people know him as the charming southerner featured so prominently on Ken Burns's fine PBS television series on the Civil War. Foote came to dominate that series because he knew more about the war than any of the other experts, although he is no professional historian. The professors could pontificate about their areas of specialization, but Foote had a fabulously detailed grasp of the conflict as a whole. He not only "knew everything cold," as his biographer C. Stuart Chapman reports; he could bring the war alive with a narrative that was not the clever invention of a storyteller but was present in the events themselves.

Foote knew so much because he spent twenty years writing *The Civil War: A Narrative*, a three-volume history of the war. He did so as a novelist taking a very extended break from his primary vocation. But his was the kind of history that only a novelist could

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write. "Accepting the historian's standard without his paraphernalia," Foote explained, "I have employed the novelist's methods without his license." How could a novel be historically accurate? "God," Foote told Burns, "is the greatest dramatist." There is enough poetry in the great and terrible deeds of human beings themselves for a novel to be discovered in—not created from—the record of what we have done.

Foote understands himself to have attempted the American *Iliad*, confident that "Homer himself had no better subject." His history is a tale of American warriors charging "wave after wave facing certain death" because their commanders were often "prisoners of tactics fifty years behind their weapons." Civil War battlefield casualties sometimes reached 30 percent, whereas 4 or 5 percent would be significant today. And this bravery was dignified, because most men—Northern and Southern—thought they were fighting for "law and order," for the perpetuation of a decent and constitutional way of life. Foote doesn't allow their possible misjudgments about the causes and purposes of the war to undermine the greatness and misery of heroic action on both sides.

Chapman contends that "Foote's focus on battlefield theatrics . . . revealed his own ideology," and that Foote averts our eyes from the true cause of the war—the monstrous injustice of slavery—to save the honor of the South's heroes. But Foote's writing makes us quite aware of the injustice of slavery and racism. His Southern partisanship is most clear, instead, in his disdain for Northern commercialism's destructive effects on human excellence and community. So Foote sees little good—surely too little good—in the outcome of the war.

Foote's point of view is always that of a novelist, and it is from this view that he prefers the aristocratic South, with all its injustice, to today's North. He is fond of quoting William Faulkner's assertion that a novelist's subject is always "the human heart in conflict with itself," and so his subject includes the ability of human beings to live nobly or well with love and death. The critic Robert Philips says that Foote's deepest concern is "the failure of love in the modern world," and that failure, in Foote's eyes, was greater in the North than in the South at its best.

Shelby Foote

University Press of Mississippi

Shelby Foote
A Writer's Life
by C. Stuart Chapman
University Press of Mississippi, 317 pp., $30

Chapman obtusely reports that Foote's novel *Love in a Dry Season* "succeeded because it dared to question whether Southern aristocracy was rooted in fictions about race, class, and gender that became naturalized by the ruling class." That kind of questioning, of course, is hardly daring in our time; it pretty much exhausts the inquiry of most books written by professors of literature. But the novel is good because Foote sees that the Southern aristocracy was *more* than a fiction that legitimized oppression. Foote's more radical thought is that the decline of the aristocracy might finally be good for justice, but at the expense of love and honor.

Chapman shows us that Foote would not have become a novelist or developed an ambivalent appreciation for aristocratic virtue had he not been lucky enough to grow up in Greenville, Mississippi. Greenville was "an oasis" of "cosmopolitan sophistication" in the South of the 1920s and 1930s. The white school system there was Mississippi's best, and the town of sixteen thousand even supported an opera house that hosted many national opera companies. More than thirty well-known writers came from the Greenville of that time.

The main cause of Greenville's singular literary excellence was the public-spirited efforts of the lawyer-poet William Alexander Percy. The son of a senator and the leading man of his region, Percy eschewed political life but encouraged the cultivation of the artistic soul. He introduced Foote to his young cousins who had come to live with him, LeRoy and Walker Percy, and Foote spent much of his high school years in Will Percy's house and under his influence. There Foote learned to love Mozart, Shakespeare, and fine novels, and was inspired to educate himself to be a writer, because he learned, as Chapman lamely puts it, "that it was acceptable and heroic to be a writer in a culture where culture and masculinity often bumped heads."

Chapman dismisses Will Percy's autobiography, *Lanterns on the Levee*, as an "infamous defense of Southern plantocracy." But the book is much more than that. Despite its obviously racist and paternalistic moments, it still deserves to be famous. *Lanterns* contains some of the most beautiful

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and profound writing by any American on nobility, truth, love, friendship, solitude, and death. As the philosopher-novelist Walker Percy wrote, it is an amazingly coherent presentation of Stoicism as a way of life. When Foote thinks of the greatness of Southern aristocracy, he is moved by the example of Will Percy, which, at its best, transcends anything particularly southern.

Foote was remarkably devoted to his vocation as a writer, which provided the only discipline in his otherwise rather chaotic and irresponsible life. Because he cared about one thing so much, he thought he had a duty to let everything else slide. His love and family lives were a mess; he was an underachiever in school, couldn't hold a job, and was a shameless parasite for years, living off the generosity of his best friend Walker Percy, not to mention various foundation grants. On these matters Chapman is nonjudgmental; his fashionable opinions sometimes serve him well.

Foote's friendship with Walker Percy, who died in 1990, is preserved in a collection of letters. Percy wrote as a Catholic, and Foote thought that Percy's religious dogma prevented him from affirming the doubt that inspires the best novelists. For Foote, doubt is the beginning of artistic truth; for Percy, it is the mystery of being human articulated so well by Christianity. On this point, Foote is closer to the Stoicism of Will Percy, who was a lapsed Catholic. But that means he is too influenced by the Stoic's despair about the modern world—which includes his despair about the outcome of the Civil War. His friend Walker Percy found a way to avoid standing undecided between the greatness of aristocracy and the justice of democracy. Chapman seems unaware of Foote's admission in recent years that his dismissal of Percy's faith was based on a crude misunderstanding of his religion. But it's still the case that Foote's only real answer to the question of how to live well with doubt, even about love, is: Write novels! Chapman's biography isn't bad, but it would be better if he had any clue about what that answer really means. ♦

From Russia, with Love

How a Russian revolutionary became a South Dakota mathematician. **BY BOB MERCER**

Historical biographies, Richard Pipes commented a few years ago, "flourish because they read like novels," and in proof, the emeritus Harvard professor of history has authored *The Degaev Affair: Terror and Treason in Tsarist Russia*, a tight little sketch of the 1880s terrorist Sergei Degaev that makes Russian revolutionary history accessible to people more used to reading novels—which is meant as an enormous compliment. Pipes tracks the journeys of Degaev and his enemy, co-conspirator, and victim, Georgii Sudeikin, head of the tsar's secret police, into their darkness of treason, terrorism, utopian scheming, betrayals, retribution, and murder.

Sergei Degaev

Perhaps the most unlikely part of the story is that Degaev survived to achieve a personal redemption in the United States as another person under another name. Pipes's tale is thus both the story of Degaev's fall and his reemergence as a man saved by a change in geography as much as in political environment. When Degaev fled Russia—after double-crossing both the Russian police and the remaining leaders of the People's Will terrorist organization—his face was shown six different ways on a wanted poster. What followed was his unlikely rebirth on the American frontier as "Alexander Pell," beloved head of the mathematics department at the fledgling University of South Dakota, as well as founder and dean of the university's first college of engineering, from 1897 to 1908. After his first wife's death, he became mentor and husband to one of the early twentieth century's leading women mathematicians, Anna Johnson Pell-Wheeler, who went on to substantial influence at Bryn Mawr.

The Degaev Affair
Terror and Treason in Tsarist Russia
by Richard Pipes
Yale University Press, 153 pp., $22.95

The question that Pipes asks to start his book is: Which was the true man? Was it "the kindly professor who in America would have been perfectly happy in a social environment where research was the dominating interest, or the revolutionary turncoat whose betrayals had sent scores of his comrades to prison in his native country and who had killed a man whose confidence he had gained?"

This is a puzzle of a story. Degaev-Pell's tale subtly juxtaposes man's responses in darkness and light: good things result from liberty, private property, and free speech, while attempts at utopia, equality of reward, and coercion are a prison of inevitable failure.

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Yale University Press

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Pipes is hardly a stranger to controversy. He was, for instance, the target of an angry 1996 letter to the *New York Times*, signed by more than a hundred delegates to the Socialist Scholars Conference, for his review of a biography of Trotsky. And he is hardly a stranger to the world of intrigue. During the early 1980s, he was an adviser to President Reagan, serving as the director of Soviet and Eastern European affairs for the National Security Council. He was among those who helped shape some of the strategy, tactics, and operations that led to Solidarity's victory in Poland.

When I asked him about the description of his work given by Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi in their 1996 *His Holiness: John Paul II And The Hidden History Of Our Time*, Pipes replied, "It is not correct . . . that I 'often' discussed covert operations with Reagan; I did not do it even once. But it is true that Reagan understood the vulnerabilities of the USSR, though it required some education."

While he also denied several times that he was involved in covert action, Pipes noted that he was present during some of the planning to get printing presses and copy machines into Communist Poland. ("I did attend one or two meetings of the committee, chaired by the vice president, that discussed the financing of Solidarity printing presses, but as an observer only," he told me.) The printing press often plays an important role in Pipes's writings. In the story of Degaev-Pell, it is the possession of a printing press, outlawed under the tsar, that leads to Degaev's arrest—triggering a ricochet of events that unmask plotters against the tsar, both outside and inside the government.

Sudeikin, the secret policeman, convinced the arrested revolutionary to name hundreds of members of the People's Will terrorist organization. But the policeman himself held higher ambitions. Even while he was destroying the People's Will, he convinced Degaev he was a fellow revolutionary.

ОБЪЯВЛЕНІЕ.

ОТСТАВНОЙ ШТАБСЪ-КАПИТАНЪ

СЕРГѢЙ ПЕТРОВЪ ДЕГАЕВЪ

Примѣты: Маленькаго роста, чрезвычайный темный блондинъ

обвиняется въ убійствѣ 16-го Декабря 1883 года Подполковника Судейкина

5,000 РУБЛЕЙ

назначено за сообщеніе полиціи свѣдѣній, которыя, давъ возможность опредѣлить мѣстонахожденіе Дегаева, повлекутъ къ его задержанію.

10,000 РУБЛЕЙ

будутъ выданы тому, кто, указавъ полиціи мѣстопребываніе Дегаева, окажетъ содѣйствіе къ задержанію преступника.

Yale University Press

The unlikely pair collaborated in plotting to assassinate top members of the tsar's government in order to facilitate Sudeikin's rise to become the most influential adviser to the tsar. From that perch, Sudeikin hoped, he would convince Nicholas III to adopt the reformist goals of the People's Will, and Degaev with his fellow revolutionaries would ultimately be successful.

That's not how history turned out. Degaev's betrayals were discovered by the People's Will. Forced to atone, Degaev plotted and carried through the murder of his quasi-ally, Sudeikin. But with his face on the government's wanted poster, and never forgiven by the remnants of People's Will, Degaev became a man without a country. He left Russia and eventually wound up on the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion, where his second life began.

In 1952, Dr. Anna Johnson Pell-Wheeler established an endowed account at the university to honor her late husband. The "Dr. Alexander Pell Scholarship" continues today. The story of Degaev-Pell was already known on campus to some faculty members before the publication of Pipes's *The Degaev Affair*. Several decades ago, the mathematics professor Alexander Mehaffey researched the lives of the husband-wife team and made several public presentations. But, so far, no one is calling for the university to renounce Pell or the endowment made in his name for scholarships to promising students of mathematics.

It might seem odd to continue to honor such a man with such a past—but perhaps that is the point of both the scholarship and Pipes's book. It is not so much what Degaev was, but who he became: a final testament to the world of liberty and freedom that allowed him to be Alexander Pell. ♦

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Hip Hop Away

The pseudo-poetry of our time.

BY DAVID SKINNER

For several years now, a poetry movement has been staged from bars and cafes across the country. Its surging popularity has led to anthologies, documentaries, feature films, a Broadway show, and even an HBO series. And, one has to admit, the poetry is accessible, passionate, and rhythmic.

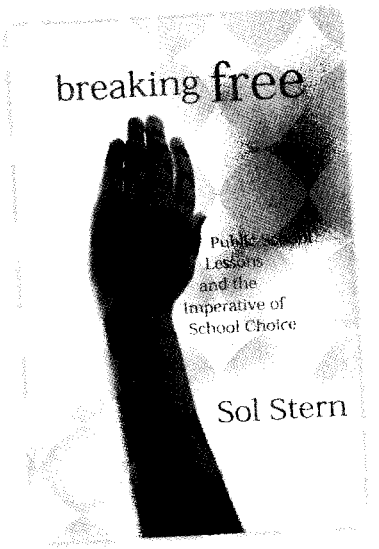
The Spoken Word Revolution
Slam, Hip Hop, and the Poetry of the New Generation
edited by Marc Eleveld
Sourcebooks, 242 pp., $24.95

It's also utterly unserious. It grants no new insights into its listener's life and times. Beauty does not become more striking while it's being recited. Neither does one's sense of the sacred, or even one's sense of language. Indeed, low ambition is what dooms this popular movement, whose democratizing efforts one might otherwise welcome.

According to the anthology *The Spoken Word Revolution: Slam, Hip Hop, and the Poetry of a New Generation*, this movement seeks to reclaim the oral tradition. But with roots going only as far as 1950s beatnik poetry at best—and, really, back only as far as the experimental theater of the 1980s, say from Eric Bogosian to Laurie Anderson—it is hard to see how slam poetry might establish an aesthetic distinct from already familiar elements of the popular culture, like rap music, to which it often pays homage. One also finds paeans to the likes of Jimi Hendrix, but not to, say, the oral tradition of Elizabethan theater, when verse (with rhyme and many other formal elements these slammers despise) did enjoy public prominence. The airwaves these poets would like to occupy are already pretty much controlled by pop music, but rather than recognize a natural enemy when they see one, they bow before it.

Those easily offended by the laughable and leftish clichés of amateurish art hype will be much put off by *The Spoken Word Revolution* and its accompanying CD, starting with the word "revolution" in its title and the phrase

David Skinner is an assistant managing editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.



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"What a powerful and timely book! The Supreme Court says school choice is constitutional. Now Sol Stern explains why it's the essential alternative to a smug, sclerotic and monopolistic public-education establishment that never puts the kids' or parents' interests first. If you didn't already understand the need to carve an exit door for children, Stern's harrowing tales will open your eyes and boost your blood pressure."

–Chester E. Finn, Jr., former Assistant Secretary of Education

Sol Stern grew up in the South Bronx and attended New York City public schools in the 1940s and 1950s, receiving the best education that America's urban public schools had to offer at the time, strong on classroom fundamentals and affirming a clear vision of America's civic culture. In ***Breaking Free***, he contrasts his experience with that of his two sons, both of whom recently attended some of New York's elite public schools. While spending time in these schools, he discovered things that should concern not only parents, but all Americans—instruction shaped by "progressive" fads and politically correct clichés; dictatorial unions that protect inept teachers; and a self protective bureaucracy that puts the interests of employees ahead of the needs of the students.

If these were the best public schools, Stern thought, the worst were unimaginable. He was right.

In his quest to understand what has gone wrong with American education, Stern also visited Catholic schools that were successfully educating minority and underprivileged children in New York. He vividly describes how these cash-starved schools are performing small miracles every day with children the public schools have betrayed or given up on. Moving on to Milwaukee and Cleveland, Stern found that voucher programs there have rescued large numbers of poor minority children from violent, chaotic and failing public schools and allowed them to attend parochial and private schools where high expectations often result in high achievement.

Breaking Free is filled with human drama and sharp insights about American education. The story Sol Stern tells shows that school choice is the new civil rights movement of our time.

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"new generation" in its subtitle. Cant flows freely through the book, with one regular of the hip-hop poetry scene touting his own crowd for its "diversity," which apparently means mostly black, drenched in musical references, and uninterested in anything but first-person free verse. Another essayist goes on at length, again in defense of what he surely believes is diversity of some kind, arguing there is no one right way to write a poem.

The Spoken Word Revolution is sadly rife with such phony defiance as well as unnecessary tributes to whomever happened to be in the bar when the poems were performed. Whereas most books would treat the social life behind a school of poetry as a subject of less interest than the poetry itself, this book does just the opposite. My own estimate sets around one to five the ratio of the words of actual poetry to the words of mood-setting essays in the book.

The book's cast of characters is sometimes its greatest source of interest. Why, one wonders, for instance, did poet laureate Billy Collins pen the book's introduction, giving the imprimatur of high office to the low histrionics of, among others, disgraced newspaper columnist Patricia Smith? Smith appears here both as a contributor and an important character of the slam poetry scene. Telling the reader "Why Slam Causes Pain and Is a Good Thing," contributor Bob Holman muses, *Because Patricia Smith has more truth in her / little finger than entire* Boston Globe *front / page*. Which is a cute sentiment, only it straddles a cliché and is demonstrably false.

Smith for her part uses slam poetry to imagine her own suicide, after which journalists around the world celebrate and *Frustrated headline writers abandon all attempts at objectivity, write: / Disgraced Ousted Sinful Ex-columnist Just Doesn't Get It*. Smith, of course, lost her job for quoting made-up people in her columns. Her inner-demon poetry, however, only strengthens the case that, indeed, she still doesn't get it.

But slam poetry is nothing if not open-minded about the literary possibilities within a rant. One of the better contributions to the volume, "How to Write a Political Poem" by Taylor Mali, satirizes the overheated protests typical of the milieu: *Mix current events with platitudes of / empowerment. / Wrap it up in rhyme or rhyme it up rap until it / sounds true*. This may appear unexceptional on the page, but as an audio track on the disc, it makes for hilarious listening.

Sourcebooks mediaFusion

Jimi Hendrix admirer Regie Gibson

There are a handful of other moments on the disc that stand out, among them a recording of Todd Alcott, doing a short one-man stage piece called "Television," included to honor slam's theatrical roots. Alcott goes off like a storm warning as he gives voice to the boob-tube's unceasing demands on our free time. Several poems that seem limp on the page come to life on the disc, reminding one of an actor improving on some miserable script. Which is all to the good for the actor, but hardly something to celebrate if what you care about most is writing.

Little of the work begs for rereading, stuck as it is in the amateur, look-at-me phase of the writer's development. One wonders what compelled Sherman Alexie to write a long poem about Dachau if it only forced him to confront his native heritage, which he appears to exploit often in his work: *If I were Jewish, how would I mourn the dead? / I am Spokane, I wake*. The "I am Spokane" formulation appears nine more times before Alexie closes his poem with another repeating line, *I have nothing new to say about death*.

Yet the pages offer up the occasional gem, as when self-proclaimed DJ Renegade does a dozens-like riff on his lover's absence. *The telephone / has put on a bathrobe, / complaining that my constant staring / makes it feel naked*. More in the spirit (and style) of these part-time poets is the awkward self-consciousness of George David Miller, when he writes *With Big Mac breath / Tide scented clothes / And a Wal-Mart fanny pack / We can still raise our arms / To the heavens and scream / "I have lived, I have lived"— / Carving epic lives / From ordinary moments*.

While the poetry leaves much to be desired, the editing job was even worse under Mark Eleveld, who once handled press relations for slam promoter Marc Smith. There is so much hype here, the combined package is little more than a press kit with overwrought graphics, an unbreakable textbook-sized hardcover, and pictures on every page. One wishes these hosts simply cared more about the poetry. ♦

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We are the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an orthodox Catholic magazine run by laymen. We never thought it would be a point of honor to note that we are not owned by the Catholic Church. But with all the priestly sex scandals and cover-ups and hush-hush payoffs, it's a relief not to suffer any guilt by association.

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We're not a public-relations sheet for the Church's bureaucracy. It's because we're fiercely loyal to the Holy Catholic Church, the Bride of Christ, that we hold the institutional Church to the highest standards of accountability in doctrine, morals, and discipline. Where the institution is messing up, the best tonic is the truth.

It's a blessing that the mighty secular media have blown the cover off the moral rot in the priesthood. Of course the media have their own agenda, often anti-Catholic. But then, God writes straight with crooked lines.

And there's a lot more rot in the Church that needs to be exposed — liturgical abuse, architectural abuse (the wrecking of once beautiful churches), silence from the pulpit on the great moral issues of our times (such as abortion), and dissent and heresy in seminaries and Catholic schools and Catholic institutions of higher learning. But we won't have the secular media in our corner on these issues.

This is where the NEW OXFORD REVIEW comes in. Not being members of the "clerical club," we gladly speak our minds. Yes, it's been ingrained in Catholics to defer to the clerics and nuns. But Bishop Bubbles is testifying before a grand jury, Fr. Funkdiddle is in jail, and Sister Snakebite has run off with Forklift Florence. That leaves a discredited hierarchy, a disheartened priesthood, a depleted convent — and you and the Pope. But the Pope can't micromanage the Church all by himself. Vatican II called for the discipling and empowering of the laity. Well, the time is NOW. It's time for us laity to roll up our sleeves and save our beloved Church. Subscribe to the monthly NEW OXFORD REVIEW, and find out how.

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"Oh, my goodness, what I got myself into I never could have predicted!"
—Hillary Clinton, during her June 8 interview with Barbara Walters

Parody

abcNEWS

20/20

TRANSCRIPT

Clinton: And that's when I met Bill and I said to myself, "Goodness gracious, great balls of fire! He's the cat's meow!"

Walters: You fell for him hard . . .

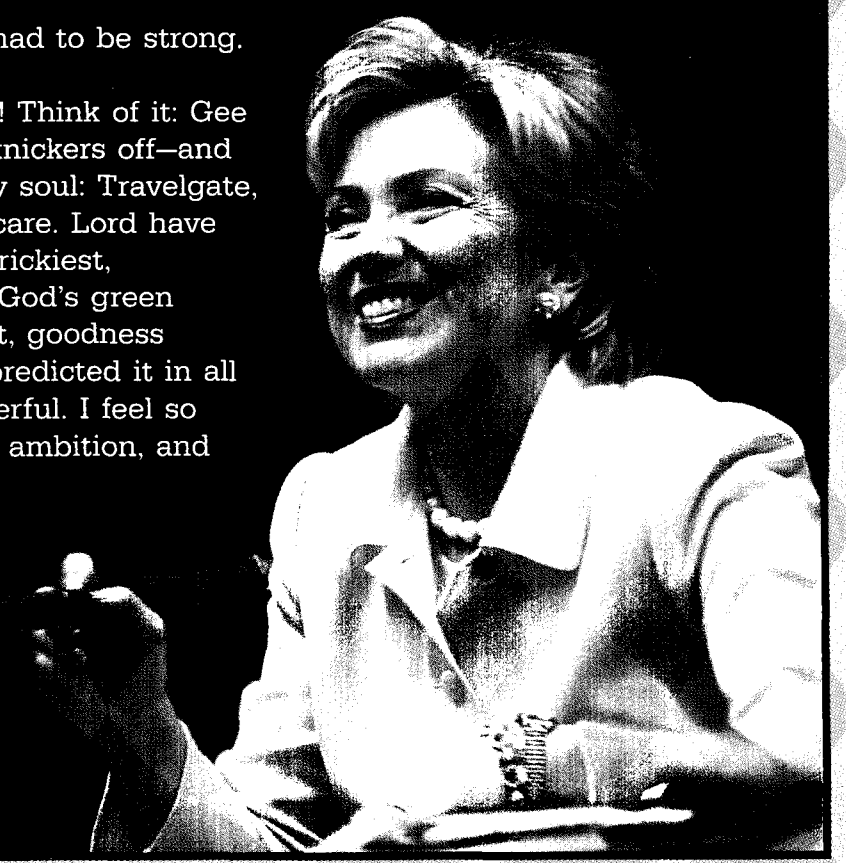
Clinton: Lordy, lordy! Here was a man I could make president. I mean, Jumpin' Jimminy! Between his pathetic need for affection and my insatiable lust for power, there'd be no stopping us. Together we'd be 23-skidoo!!

Walters: That's when you arranged the sham marriage . . .

Clinton: Golly gee whillikers with a cherry on top! I loathed that worthless slimebag. He was out there with his state troopers bopping bimbos and I was like, okey-dokey artichokey, I guess it's up to me to loot savings and loans and trade futures. Saints alive if I'm going to be just another of these hicks.

Walters: So you learned you had to be strong.

Clinton: It was so neato-keen! Think of it: Gee whiz! I'm out there lying my knickers off—and getting away with it! Bless my soul: Travelgate, Filegate, the pardons, health care. Lord have mercy! I just turned into the trickiest, connivingest little woman on God's green earth. When I think back on it, goodness gracious. I never could have predicted it in all my days. It was just so wonderful. I feel so blessed. Just little ole me, my ambition, and boatloads of gullible Americans!



the weekly Standard
June 23, 2003

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Are Deficits and Interest Rates Related?

Ken Judd is the Paul H. Bauer Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution.

As the federal government once again begins to run large budget deficits, some have begun to express fears that interest rates could start to creep up. Should we be concerned?

There are two reasons that deficits may raise interest rates. First, the law of supply and demand argues that an increase in the federal government's demand for credit will push up the price of credit. Second, an expanding national debt may spark fears in the credit markets that the Federal Reserve will print additional money to cover some of that debt and thereby produce inflation. Although both arguments have some merit, their significance has been exaggerated.

The federal government is a large debtor. It currently owes its public creditors about 3.5 trillion dollars, and it may add another trillion or more in this decade. This sounds like a large increase, but it must be compared to the total credit market in which interest rates are determined. There is an enormous amount of debt in the United States. Businesses owe about 7 trillion dollars, and state and local governments owe another 1.5 trillion dollars. Home mortgages total nearly 8 trillion dollars. Moreover, mortgage borrowing grew by 4 trillion dollars over the past decade without triggering interest-rate increases. Other consumer debt totals 1.6 trillion dollars. Thus, **although the federal debt is large, it constitutes only 12 percent of the total debt owed by U.S. debtors.**

Furthermore, the U.S. government is only one player in a large and rapidly growing world market. For example, foreign investors financed much of the new borrowing by Washington in the 1980s, thus averting the interest-rate explosion predicted by some critics of Reaganomics. Although the federal government is the largest single player in the world's credit markets, its debt load offers only a fraction of the complete picture. A one- or two-trillion-dollar increase in federal debt will have a small, if any, effect on interest rates.

Creditors also demand higher interest rates if they fear that the Fed will use inflation to finance the new debt. Although many countries have resorted to inflation in times of fiscal distress, these fears are not justified today. First, the United States is not in fiscal distress. U.S. debt is only a third of its ten-trillion-dollar annual national income, a small ratio by international standards. Even fiscally conservative Germany has debt equal to 60 percent of its national income. **The strong U.S. economy and fiscal system make it possible to finance a much larger national debt without resorting to inflation.** Second, the Volcker and Greenspan regimes at the Federal Reserve have given the United States a credible, low-inflation monetary policy. Credit markets are less worried about future inflation because the Fed did not resort to inflation during the large deficit years of the 1980s.

These arguments are supported by statistical studies, which consistently find that low interest rates are mostly affected by inflation and that any tendency of deficits to raise interest rates is small or nonexistent. There are many important fiscal policy issues regarding deficit spending. Fortunately, interest-rate worries should not be among them.

— Ken Judd

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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